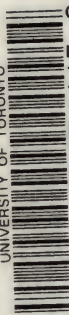


# LESSER QUESTIONS

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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*Lady Seune.*













## LESSER QUESTIONS





# Lesser Questions

BY

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REMINGTON AND CO., LIMITED

15, KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON

AND SYDNEY

1894

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# LESSER QUESTIONS.

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## INTRODUCTION.

If there were a Rip Van Winkle of this century, the space of his slumbers would appear to him revolutionary. If we review the changes which have come over England since the beginning of the reign of George IV., we shall find much to awaken surprise. It is true that we regard the early part of this century with much less interest, perhaps, than any other time in the annals of our country ; true, also, that we know less of the immediate past than of less close times, the records of which form part of our education. The Reformation, the Revolution, the great struggle for supremacy between us and the French, and our ultimate victory, the independence of America, and the political strifes of the early days of the century, are affairs with which every English person, well-educated or ill-educated, is more or less accurately acquainted ; but for most of us the history of England ceases, or becomes

shadowy, with the passing of the first Reform Bill. It is surely true, however, that no time has been so full of interest, so replete with events and discoveries which have influenced the character of our people and the trend of our history, than the last sixty years. The great political struggle was over. Reform changed the polity of the country. Our industrial system had been newly equipped with steam practically applied. We need not now enter into any of the profound causes which influenced our life and country and have brought about the complex problems of our modern life. Still, it may be interesting to indicate some of the contrasts between now and eighty years ago. The whole gigantic system of railways in England, the development of the Press, the cheapening of every article of daily want, the application of machinery to industrial works,—these are a few of the momentous changes. That which has affected us more than any other was the introduction of railways : in the facility they gave for rapid communication and for bringing every part of the country into personal contact with the others.

Although attempts to open a railway between Manchester and Liverpool were made in 1824, it was not until 1830 that the design was accomplished, and some years elapsed before the English Railway System became a *fait accompli*. In 1847 the fever of railway-making speculation reached its height. From that day the whole system of English life and habit has been changing. The importance of London has grown enor-

mously. Many a large town which was the centre of an important society has sunk into a decayed gentility, while young competitors have risen in industrial enterprise. Until the development of railways brought London into close contact with other parts of the Kingdom, there were large societies in many parts; and these societies, as I shall show by-and-bye, were not unimportant. They have disappeared, and the cause is obvious. When we can go from John O'Groat's House to London and back for £7, it is unnecessary to point out how the discovery of steam and the development of railways have revolutionised our life. It only needs a glance through the pages of a foreign *Bradshaw* to see how rapidly and cheaply we may reach the farthest corner of the world. The world can be girdled in eighty days. It hardly seems possible that communication can become more rapid or more searching; but anyone prophesying these things a hundred years ago would have been deemed a madman.

The question whether this rapid communication is an unmixed blessing is too large for discussion here. There are a few persons who still say that railway travelling, telegraphs, and letters, are the bane of life; and that nowhere, how remote soever may be their retreat, are they protected from the destroyers of their daily peace. It is difficult to realise what the world was like in the old days. Theoretically, it may have been more peaceful and more picturesque, and certainly there was not the feverish desire for movement and information which now pervades the country. Repose

is gone, never to return. Many people live in the train — business men and persons of leisure alike. Everybody wants change ; life cannot be stagnation ; and so the ebb and flow goes on. It would be difficult to find anyone in London who had never been in the country or to the sea ; and the number of country people, even among the labouring classes, who have not been to London is rapidly decreasing. The most lovely places in England are desecrated by hideous advertisements, because the railway train hurrying on bears the probable buyer of the nostrum prepared by the enterprising trader ; and many other kindred things are signs of the ubiquity of the railroad. In the far north of Scotland, thirty years ago, the post arrived every other day only, and papers were three days old. News travelled slowly, and if it was not convenient to send for letters they lay at the post office for some days. The post now arrives twice daily, and we have our newspapers in time for breakfast next morning. All the country is affected similarly ; but let any one anxious to see one of the most remarkable sights of the day go to any of the large termini and watch the departure of a newspaper train in the early morning. The huge monster dashes on, carrying news of the debates in the Houses of Parliament, and details of the last murder, and sporting intelligence, and information on many other public matters, which an exacting people insist on having with their breakfast. The rapidity with which we get full details of any public event, quite apart from



the earlier telegraphic intelligence, contrasted with the long period which elapsed, formerly, before anything more than the bare facts were known, is extraordinary. The news of the great battles at the end of the last century and the beginning of the 19th were days in reaching us. That great engagements were pending was known ; but there was exciting delay, and often imperfect information before the full facts could be ascertained. The Crimean War, which many of us remember, forms a contrast to the later campaigns in which England has been engaged, when the first intelligence, flashed by the electric telegraph, has been succeeded rapidly by the detailed account of the incidents of the battle. The despatches with the news of the victory at Waterloo were brought by carriage from Dover to London ; and the papers containing the debates on the passing of the Defence Bill were taken down the country by the coaches, which were the only means of locomotion for such goods. The late Mr. Bright used to say that one of the most exciting and rapid journeys from Edinburgh to London was made by the coaches containing the advance copies of the *Waverley Novels*, whose arrival was watched for by anxious crowds at various stations on their journey, where the numbers consigned to the local booksellers were thrown out as the coach drove rapidly on. Now the modern novel, or any work of public interest, leaves London by night mail, and is delivered at its destination within a few hours. Do we enjoy our literary feasts as much as the crowds who hungered for the pages of

*Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* and read them after longing and waiting hours for the lumbering coach to deliver its burden? It is not only as regards letters, papers, books, and so on, that one's wants are ministered unto. The necessities and the luxuries of life are now within the reach of everyone who can afford them. The flowers of the Riviera decorate one's tables; the daffodils and the narcissus of the Channel and the Scilly Islands are gathered for us long before the whisperings of the English Spring are heard; America and our distant colonies give us canvass-backed ducks; we have grouse from Norway, salmon from Canada, Australian mutton, New Zealand butter and eggs, Indian wheat, and fruit from the West Indies. We are left with not much scope for home production. The English farmer must needs exercise great patience. No sooner does he establish a new culture than it is destroyed by the foreign competitor, and his satisfaction at the convenience with which he gets his goods to market must be considerably mitigated by the facilities which easy locomotion offers to his rivals.

The ease and the luxury which we see on every hand are the result of the facility and cheapness with which everything that the most fastidious and exacting person can require is placed within his reach. The increase of theatres in London, of concert halls, of all places of amusement, is the result of the easy railway communication between it and the suburbs: the crowded audiences of popular plays, or operas,

are as much drawn from the distant suburbs as from the Town itself. The endless curiosity, the conscious feeling that everyone is so much nearer every other than formerly, and the almost complete obliteration of distance, or the feeling of distance, are the distinctive outcomes of this state of things. People compare the suburbs with streets, and now trains are run to enable the dwellers in Norwood and in Clapham "to delight their eyes by going and taking part in the Church Parade." The amusements of life are, at first sight, not an important element in the question ; but the amusements of a people are nearly the best test of their social and moral condition, and no one can deny that the changes which have come over England in those respects in the last fifty years are very great. Thirty years ago there were fewer theatres, and prices were much less ; but the houses, with one or two exceptions, were empty, and in a very poor financial condition. Now, with the enormous increase in the number of places of amusement and a distinct increase in the prices of seats, theatres, concert halls, and music halls, are crammed ; and if we ask where the audiences come from, and go to Waterloo, or to Victoria, or to Charing-Cross Station, and watch the departure of the midnight trains, we get our question answered. The facility of locomotion has revolutionised business life in England. A City man formerly had his house of business in London, in Manchester, in Liverpool, wherever his work lay ; his movements were necessarily confined within that place. Now a man can breakfast in

London, go to Manchester (a distance of 184 miles), spend some hours there, and return in time to dine in London. Hunting men can leave London early in the morning, have their day's sport, and be back in time for dinner. We can dine in London and breakfast in Dublin. In short, we can go almost anywhere now in little over twelve hours. Rapid as our travelling is, we are hard-pressed by the Americans, who, from the great distances to be traversed, carry their commissariat with them. Their great trains to the Far West are huge moving towns. We read of 70 miles an hour as maximum speed; and the chronograph will register sometimes as much as 80 or 82 miles. Whether such a speed can be exceeded is as yet a problem; but the present rate of covering distance is stupendous.

Can we wonder, when we realise what a marvellous change this easy locomotion is, that it has reformed all the conditions of life? The restless activity of the people is increasing, and no one can remain long in one place. Tired of exploring our own country, we wander forth abroad, even to the antipodes. The numbers of those who go to America, to India, to Australia, are increasing yearly. The North Pole and the South have, up till now, withstood the onslaught of the railway and the telegraph; but he would be a bold man who should predict how long they are likely to remain isolate. Soon the enterprising Mr. Cook may lead his followers over the frozen glaciers and the untrodden snows of the mysterious lands.



How far are we better off, or happier, in the new life that we live in ? Have we gained in the change from the peace, tranquillity, and dignity, of the past, to the ceaseless action of to-day ?

The advantages are so obvious that the question seems hardly worth discussing. There are only a few who would maintain that life to-day is not easier, pleasanter, and more full of interest, than it was fifty years ago. Some dignity, reverence, romance, has disappeared. We are in an age of publicity. Nothing is private ; nothing sacred. The most intimate events of life are the property of the enterprising interviewer, and the higher our position the more are our lives and all that concerns us the property of the public. In fact, any attempt to preserve *incognito* is deeply resented. All the entertaining details of life are so much "copy" with which to appease the appetite of the public. The struggle for everything—existence, fame, enjoyment—is keen, and it is waged more keenly from year to year. The standard is higher, the pressure more intense ; therefore, the gifts which enable us to attain success are of higher quality. The diffusion of knowledge is more general ; but whether the knowledge be profound is another matter. The levelling-up process, which improved education has set going, may raise the standard ; but it may also tend to create a drear level of mediocrity. Greater happiness, a larger measure of success, is attainable by a very much larger portion of the community ; and we must not look too closely at the standard of excellence,

but content ourselves with the hope that we are nearing the goal of the modern idealist and finding the greatest happiness among the greatest number. Perhaps, in the past, when philosophers surveyed the world, and the complex questions of life, from a higher intellectual standpoint, they were able to attain a higher conception of perfection than we are, who rub shoulders with every class of the community. With our lesser knowledge and our greater humility, we accepted their teachings and their standard of what life ought to be, and listened to the truths they propounded, with the awe and respect our latter-day independence has swept away. How can any one be wiser than another? The problems of the world, with their endless developments, are no longer obscure, when we can see the Indian in his inglorious degeneration, and watch the struggle for supremacy among the black and the white races in America, with our own eyes, and listen to the voices of our distant children in the Parliaments of the great Australian Continent. When we are all brought into such close personal contact, when we are almost on a speaking acquaintance with the whole world, how can we accept the older affirmations of philosophy without dissent? Can not we make our own deductions and inductions from personal experience and observation? Modern life does not lend itself to reflection. The contemplative mind belonged to another age. We live fast ; we know much ; and we seek to cram all the emotions and excitements and amusements of an age into the short space of our own life. The

intimate *rapport* into which we are brought with every corner of the world, the ceaseless activity, and the endless variety of life, leave us no leisure for rest or meditation. This is a time when the vocation of most people appears to be to secure the greatest possible amount of pleasure and put the stern realities of life aside. This does not, however, obliterate the consciousness of the deeper responsibilities of life. Side by side with it, one sees a passionate desire to make life better, to those who suffer and want, among some who have eagerly recognised the necessities of those who are destitute, and the obligations which good fortune imposes. Again, although the dogmatic beliefs of religion are being discarded, and the spirit of liberalism and doubt, which has impregnated our political and social life, has attacked the stronghold of our faith, there never was a time when a deeper religious feeling pervaded the majority. Into the laughter and light of our pleasure creep the shadow of sorrow and the consciousness of the true realities of life ; into our hurried day comes a deep yearning for rest. The world's problems, its mysteries, its tragedies, are always with us ; and in calmer and deeper moments they bring a consolation, even a repose, growing out of their stern permanence. That part of the world which is busy with affairs is engrossed by realities which, howsoever great their material value, are closing the portals of imagination. We have lost romance and superstition. In the quest after excitement, amusement, variety, we have little time to enter that world of piety, love, and

sacrifice, which lies around us. Still, in the hurry and scramble which the past fifty years have brought, we can if we will, find peace in poetry and romance ; whose influence must be good on us and on our time, taking us out of engrossing material conceptions, and placing temporalities in their own relation. There are some, even now, who, when the days are ended, and the silent night folds her wings over the busy world, wander into the realms of imagination, and, in the land of dreams, find something to soothe the longing for spiritual consolation ; and in the finding (even, sometimes, in the seeking) realise that nearly all our "burning questions" are the mere fume and fret of time, which, necessarily, is always, for the finite mind, at flood-tide. Each decade has its alarums soothed in the indifference towards them of the next, and we disquiet ourselves in vain when we take our revolutions in manners seriously. They are trivial and fleeting, after all : as we shall unanimously own when, in years to come, we are wrestling with the Spirit of a new Age, in admiring awe at the profundity of our own misgivings.

## A HIGHLAND SEER AND SCOTCH SUPERSTITIONS.

The Lowlands have always been considered the home of the fairy lore of Scotland. Sir Walter Scott and Burns created a world of fairies and warlocks, and invested them with all the interest which their versatile imaginations could create. The Eildon Hills, the regions by Melrose, Moffat, and Abbotsford, were peopled by spirits, the offspring of Scott's fancy ; and Burns bestowed on his part of Scotland a progeny of the supernatural. The Highlands, so far away and beyond the reach of travellers, were an unknown world to the outside, while the savage character of the Highlanders and their internecine feuds caused them to be considered ignorant and destitute of any gifts of imagination or poetry. That this belief should have existed is not surprising. The Highlanders were shut up in their mountain fastnesses, obliged to hold their lands by the right of might, and often defeated, sometimes almost exterminated, during the wars between the clans. It was difficult to imagine the probability of any development among them of the softer influences that affected the Lowlands.

Nevertheless, as the country began to be opened up, and the excitement following the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 subsided, it was discovered that there were not only the same beliefs and superstitions as in the Lowlands, but also an imaginative spirit that was no less prolific. In the struggle for mastery among the clans, some of the highest mental qualities, notably the feeling of loyalty and devotion to the Chiefs, were developed. The love of a child for its parent is not more intense than this clannish affection; and there is no story in history more touching than that of the pains, perils, and temptations, endured by the Highlanders in their allegiance to the House of Stuart. The qualities shown to be possessed by these wild people would in a higher state of civilization have produced very great men; but education was scanty, and we now see only the simple grandeur of unswerving loyalty. The softer side of the Highland nature sought an outlet in supernatural beliefs, which were stimulated by the romantic nature of the scenery and the gloomy climate. Behind the mountain passes, shrouded among the mists and rain, listening to the whistling wind, the fury of the tempest, and the roar of the sullen thunder, the race found a language in the pathos of the bagpipes. Even in their war-songs and gathering-songs, we find the tender, mournful strains. When the pipes summoned the clansmen to battle, the echo of their music among the hills fell on the air as a lament for those who would never return. The same melancholy pervades all the Celtic music. It expresses the deepest sorrow the

Highlanders have ever experienced, their grief over the clearances sixty years ago, which stirred to the inmost depths their hearts and imaginations. Great tracts of country were depopulated, and the inhabitants sent across the seas, in the interests, as the Highlanders always believed, of the landlords. In the distant antipodes, in the far-off wilds of Canada, where the Highlanders have prospered, they still cling with all the passionate devotion of their Celtic natures to the memory of their homes. In the wild song and laments of their fatherland they find utterance for feelings of sorrow and longing that can never be eradicated.

The belief in fairies and brownies (brownies are the more playful fairies) seems to belong more to the Lowlands than to the Highlands. The character of the people was softer, and the lighter superstitious beliefs found a more fitting home there than in the Highlands. The austere character of the Highlanders invested the supernatural inhabitants of the glens and mountains with something akin to their own dark nature. Thus, the fairies and brownies of the Lowlands take in the North the form of warnings that in gruesome guise foretell misfortune. Every great family in the North was believed to have a supernatural omen which appeared before the death of any prominent member. It varied in most cases; but each family generally received the same warning of death which was given to its Chief.

Striking coincidences, no doubt, there have been, important enough to convince a highly superstitious



people. Among the Mackenzies, the Death Candle was said to appear before the death of any leading member. A large light arose in the sky, sailing slowly till it arrived above the place where lived the person whose death it predicted ; then it would slowly disappear in a brilliant coruscation. In Tulloch Castle a Cold Hand was laid on the face of the person who was to die. In another family a White Owl presented itself when any member was about to depart this life ; and in another a Black Dog ; while on the west coast of the Highlands an Old Woman, commonly called the "Gruagach," foretold the departure of some important member of the family to which she belonged.

Second-sight is the supernatural gift most common, and most revered, in the Highlands. It was possessed by people of both sexes. The trance during which the subliminal consciousness was aglow came at longer or shorter intervals, of greater or less intensity. As a rule, the gift was more largely possessed by women than by men : the nervous and impressionable nature of a woman made her the better medium. There are so many well-known instances of witches in Scottish history that we need not narrate any here. The belief in witches and in their powers survived until quite recently. Even at this present day, when all Scotland seems given up to material interests, there are still treasured up in many parts the traditions and sayings of those who were supposed to possess the gift of opening the book of fate. Fatal it was to all concerned. It always brought enmity and misfortune to the Seer,



and his sayings were fraught with disaster to those around him. The gloomy future, with its mysteries and its pain, had a special interest to the Highlander, who endeavoured to find in it an answer to the vague riddles that perplexed his unquiet nature.

The most interesting figure in all the Scotch history of prophecy and second-sight is one known only to those who, from association or by family tradition, are connected with him. That is the more remarkable inasmuch as his sayings and prophecies are the most largely quoted in the Highlands. Some of them have acquired a position which amounts to little less than a religious belief.

Kenneth Mackenzie (or, as he is best known, Coinneach Odhar) was beyond all comparison the most remarkable of the Highland Seers. His sayings have been known throughout the Highlands for over a hundred and fifty years. They were well known to Sir Walter Scott, and some mention is made of them in Lockhart's *Life*, especially in connection with the prophecy that stamped Coinneach as the Prophet of his day. He was born in the island of Lewis, and was all his life closely connected with the family of the Earl of Seaforth, then the great head of the clan, and one of the most powerful chiefs of the time. At an early age he settled on the mainland, in a cottage on the banks of Loch Ussie, a short distance from Brahan Castle, the home of his Chief. There are various traditions as to his birth and the means by which he became possessed of the gift of second-sight; but the most generally

received is that on one occasion he fell asleep on the hill-side, and on awaking found on his breast a small round white stone which gave him the power of prophecy, and saved his life in several miraculous ways. He occupied a comparatively humble position ; but, being a man of some slight education and refinement, he was much sought after by the great people who lived in that part of the world, not only for his wonderful knowledge, but for the gentle excellence of his life.

He came into personal contact with the wife of Lord Seaforth, a haughty woman of violent and jealous temper, who consulted the Seer when occasion arose, and displayed great confidence in his counsel. Her confidence proved fatal to the Seer. Lord Seaforth had occasion to go to Paris after the Restoration of Charles II., and he left Lady Seaforth in Scotland. Becoming uneasy over his protracted absence, she sent messages to Kenneth, bidding him come instantly and give her tidings of her lord. Reluctantly obeying, Kenneth made his appearance at the Castle ; and was instantly summoned into the presence of the great lady, who asked where Lord Seaforth was. Having been told whither the Chief had gone, and saying that he could find him, alive or dead, the Seer put the White Stone to his eye, and assured Lady Seaforth that her lord was well and happy. "But," asked Lady Seaforth, "where is he ?" "That is not necessary for your ladyship's knowledge," Kenneth answered. "Be assured he is well." His assurances only increased the curiosity and anxiety of Lady Seaforth, who pro-

ceeded from civility to threats. Kenneth at length said, "Your lord is well and happy, and he is in a fair chamber hung with fine tapestry, and there is a bonnie lady with him, and he is on bended knees before her, with her hand pressed to his lips."

The rage of Lady Seaforth knew no bounds. It should have been directed against her husband; but it was poured on the head of the Prophet. The disclosure had been made in public before many of her friends and the retainers of the family. Enraged at the outrage upon her having become known, she formed a sudden resolution to destroy the Seer. Turning on him with overpowering passion, reproaching him for defaming the name of his great Chief, branding him as a slanderer, she declared that there and then she would take the most signal vengeance, and have him put to death by the most ignominious means, that of being burnt as a wizard.

No time was allowed for preparation; no prayers for forgiveness were heard; and there was no opportunity given for intercession. The Seer was led forth to slaughter. Finding that all hope was gone, Kenneth resigned himself to his fate; and on his way to the stake, before the enraged Countess, paused, and, drawing forth his White Stone, uttered a prophecy about the family of Seaforth. "I see into the far future, and I read there the doom of my destroyer. Ere many generations have passed, the line of Seaforth will become extinct in sorrow. I see the last male of his line both deaf and dumb. I see his three fair sons, all

of whom he will follow to their grave. He shall sell his gift lands, and no future Seaforth shall rule in Kintail. A black-eyed lassie from the East, with snow on her coif, shall succeed him ; she shall kill her sister ; and she shall be the last of the Mackenzies of Seaforth. In these days there shall be a daft Lovat and a buck-tooth Chisholm, and they shall be the last direct males of their line. When these things are, Seaforth may know that his sons are doomed to death, and that his broad lands shall pass away to the stranger, and that his race shall be no more."

When Kenneth had uttered this uncomfortable prophecy, he threw the White Stone away. Tradition says it fell into a small well, from which there immediately gushed a large spring, and spreading, formed the lake, at the foot of Knockfarrel, called Ussie. From Braham, Kenneth was dragged by orders of Lady Seaforth, now doubly distraught by his prophecies, to Chanory Point, twenty miles distant, where he was burnt to death. Lord Seaforth arrived at Braham, shortly after Kenneth had started on his last journey, and, on hearing of what had occurred, rode fast-and-furiously to Fortrose, in hope of averting the death of the wretched man ; but he arrived only in time to see the embers of the fire which had destroyed his devoted vassal.

Such, briefly, is the history of the man the fulfillments of whose prophecies form some of the most curious chapters in the history of supernatural affairs in Scotland. It may be as well, before passing to other prophecies he is said to have made, to trace the

fulfilment of the Seaforths' doom. The Countess of Seaforth, to whom Kenneth owed his death, was the daughter of Sir John Mackenzie of Tarbart, and sister of the first Earl of Cromartie. She married Kenneth, third Earl of Seaforth, who died in 1678, and was succeeded by his son. During the Rebellion of 1715, Lord Seaforth took the side of Prince Charles Edward, was obliged to fly the country, and took refuge in Spain. The titles and estates were forfeit to the Crown ; but they were restored to him in 1726, and he lived in honour and wealth. The vicissitudes which attended all powerful Highland families at that time assailed the Seaforths ; but the family continued to prosper. The ruin which the Rebellion of 1715 brought on many great families was retrieved in their case, and restored possessions and honours preserved the dignity of the family. Curiously, on the death of the last Earl of Seaforth without a son, the family possessions passed to his cousin, descended from the sanguinary Countess ; and in his person, or, rather, in the person of his brother, the prophecy of Coinneach Odhar was accomplished.

Francis Mackenzie, Lord Seaforth, was a remarkable man. He was possessed of great intellectual capacity ; but became, from a bad illness contracted while at school, deaf, and, as is not uncommon in such cases, towards the end of his life, dumb. In spite of those physical infirmities, he led a life of useful activity. He raised a regiment at the end of the great war. He was Governor of Barbados, and afterwards of Demerara

and Berbice. He was a Lieut.-General in the army, and in 1797 was created Baron Seaforth of Kintail. There were, however, circumstances which must often have made him feel ill at ease. He married happily and well, and was blessed with three fine sons and six daughters ; and round him on either side he saw his neighbours, the two great contemporary chiefs of the day, with the physical peculiarities mentioned by Coinneach Odhar. However, the fatal truth was forced on him, and on all those who remembered the family prophecy, by events that filled his house with sorrow. One after another, his three sons died. The last, the eldest and most distinguished, was cut off in youth.

The stricken father died in 1815, the last male of his race. The great Seaforth estates were inherited by his daughter, Lady Hood, whose husband, Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, had, just before her father's death, died in India. She returned from India in her widow's weeds to take possession of her inheritance. She was thus literally a white-hooded lassie (that is, a young woman in widow's weeds) from the East. Lady Hood married some years later Mr. Stewart, a grandson of the Earl of Galloway, and lived in happiness on her vast estates. After many years of prosperity, a calamity overtook Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie. One day, when she was driving her sister in a carriage, the ponies took fright, and started off at a furious pace down a precipitous road. She and her sister were thrown out. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie recovered ; but



her sister, after lingering for days, died. As Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie was driving at the time of the accident, she may, not inaccurately, be described as having caused her sister's death : thus fulfilling a clause of Coinneach's prophecy.

It is curious to note that the prophecy was not discovered or developed contemporaneously or after the events. It had been current in the Highlands for generations, and the gradual fulfilment of the doom of the Seaforths was watched with sorrow for more than half-a-century. One curious instance of how firmly rooted the belief in the prophecy was, occurred in 1812, when Lord Seaforth, in consequence of the mismanagement of his large West India estates, found himself in such difficulties that he was constrained to sell some of his property on the west coast of Ross-shire, the lands of Kintail—the "gift lands" (as they were best known)—the oldest possession of the family. They had been granted to the common ancestor of the Mackenzies, Colin Fitzgerald, one of the Geraldine family in Ireland,—an outlaw (tradition asserts) who had taken refuge on the shores of Loch Duich, in Kintail,—in recognition of his having saved the life of the King, Alexander III., out hunting. The King gave him as reward a tract of land in the form of a stag's head, which was commonly known as the "gift lands" of the Seaforths. So firmly was the prophecy believed in, when the tenants on the Kintail lands heard of the necessities of their Chief, they subscribed a sum of over £3000 among themselves, and sent it to

Lord Seaforth, in the vain hope that it might lighten his temporary embarrassment and avert the evil days. Another evidence of the antiquity of the prophecy is found in letters from the Countess of Seaforth, in 1722, to her sister, Lady Arundel of Wardour, mentioning the story and commenting upon it.

Thus we have two distinct proofs of the currency of the prophecy fifty years before the Seaforth in whose person it was fulfilled was born. Lockhart, in his *Life*, says that "Mr. Morritt can testify thus far that he heard the prophecy quoted in the Highlands at a time when Lord Seaforth had two sons alive and in good health, and that it was certainly not made after the event;" and Sir Walter Scott, in writing to Mr. Morritt, says, "Our friend, Lady Hood, will now be Caberfeigh herself. I do fear the accomplishment of the prophecy that when there should be a deaf Caberfeigh the house is to fall." Then, the stanzas in which Sir Walter laments the extinction of the family contain no more touching words than those in which he alludes to the dramatic tragedies that clouded the last days of the old Chief's life.—

"Thy sons rose around thee in light and in love,  
All a father could hope, all a friend could approve.

What 'vails if, the tale of thy sorrows to tell,

In the spring-time of youth and of promise they  
fell?

Of the line of MacKenneth remains not a male  
To bear the proud name of the Chief of Kintail."



The prophecy has come true in its fullest and saddest sense. Of the vast possessions of the Seaforths, only a very small portion now belongs to the representative of that once powerful family.

There are many prophecies relating to other families in the North ; but there is none which is so detailed. The buck-toothed Chisholm (a man with teeth in a double row), the stammering Gairloch, the daft Grant, and the harelipped Laird of Raasay, were well-known subjects of Coinneach ; and, curiously, the representatives of those four families at the time of the deaf and dumb Seaforth were marked by the peculiarities mentioned.

There are many of Coinneach's prophecies which, devoid of the personal interest attaching to the Seaforth seership, are none the less interesting. One well known is that alluding to the opening of railways. He said that "the day will come when long black carriages without horses will go through the country and cross the stance of the Muir of Ord ;" and the Highland Railway crosses the spot indicated. Another, relating to the opening-up of the Highlands, is "that the country will be crossed from sea to sea by white bands ;" which is evidently an allusion to the magnificent roads made through the North, after the battle of Culloden, by General Wade and his army. A curious coincidence was related to me by a lady who, soon after her marriage, made an expedition into Kintail to see the country. She was an English woman, and had never heard of Coinneach and his prophecies. One

day she was taken to the summit of a high hill in Lochalsh by one of the MacRaes, a family of great antiquity in Ross-shire, and one of the subject clans of the Mackenzies. On arriving at the top she was struck by the curious effect on the scenery of the great roads which intersected the country on all sides, and exclaimed to her companion, "O, Captain MacRae, the country looks as if it were covered by white bands of ribbon!" To her surprise, the old man reverently took off his hat, saying, softly, "Eh, my dear! but those are the very words that Coinneach Odhar himself said over a hundred years ago!" A prophecy relating to a small well-wooded hill close to Inverness, called Tomnahurich, "the hill of the fairies," is worth mentioning. "The day will come when Tomnahurich will be kept under lock and key, and large ships shall sail round or under its shadow." Some years ago the Inverness people made a cemetery on Tomnahurich; gates have to be opened to admit visitors; and the Caledonian Canal now runs below the hill.

We may perhaps allow that some of the prophecies were due not so much to supernatural knowledge on Coinneach's part as to the conviction (which a man of some intelligence and education could not help having) that a hundred years must bring very important changes into his country; but, explain them as we may, they are none the less curious coincidences. Two other of Coinneach's prophecies will suffice. "The estate of Fairburn shall be sold three times, and the second time it shall be bought back by the Sea-

forths ; but before they buy it a cow shall calve in the highest room in the Tower of Fairburn." The estate of Fairburn, one of the oldest possessions of the Sea-forths, was given to a younger son as a "wadset" (a portion). For many years it continued in the possession of the Mackenzies of Fairburn, who at last sold it to a family in whose possession it remained a very short time. On coming into the market again, it was bought by the Hon. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie of Seaforth, the representative of the Seaforth family. The old castle of Fairburn was practically in ruins. It was necessary to make repairs. While workmen were engaged in them a cow contrived to ascend to the very top of the tower by means of planks which had been placed to enable them to ascend. She was so near her time for calving, and the room into which she had climbed was so large, that it was decided to let her remain. She there gave birth to a calf. I remember an old woman, who lived by the Tower of Fairburn, assuring me that she had heard of the prophecy long before the event. Sojourning near Inverness, Coinneach crossed over what is now known as the battle-field of Culloden. He is said to have exclaimed, "O, Drumrossie, thy bleak moor shall ere many generations have passed away be bathed with the blood of the best and noblest in the Highlands ! Glad am I that God will spare me the sight of that day. For it will be a terrible one. The proudest heads will fall, and no mercy will be shown, or quarter given, on either side." How true his words proved is known to all

who have read the history of the last battle fought on Scottish soil.

It will be observed that Coinneach's prophecies were of a mournful nature. He possessed the power, apparently, of reading only sad and disastrous futures. His own tragic doom may unconsciously have influenced prevision for others. In none of his sayings or prophecies do we find anything joyous or pleasant. There is only one in which we discern a tinge of humour. He says, in one of his songs, "The day will come when the Lewis men shall go forth with their hosts to battle; but they will be turned by the jawbone of an animal smaller than an ass." This prediction sounds ridiculous and incomprehensible to the last degree; yet it was fulfilled in a natural and very simple manner. Lord Seaforth and the leading men of the clan went "out" in 1715 and in 1719, and had their estates forfeit. Only a few years before 1745 their lands and honours were restored to Lord Seaforth and to Mackenzie eleventh Baron of Hilton. The Rev. Colin Mackenzie, Minister of Fodderty and Laird of Glack, was the first in the neighbourhood to receive news of the landing of Prince Charles Edward in 1745. Lord Seaforth had still the warmest feelings of attachment to the Prince, which were shared by the minister, who, although at heart a thorough Jacobite, was a great personal friend of President Forbes. The minister had been persuaded through that influence to remain neutral; and, fearing that his friend Seaforth on hearing the news might be induced to join the Prince, he

started for Brahan Castle. Late at night he crossed the hill of Knockfarrel, entered Seaforth's bedroom by the window, and informed him of the Prince's landing. They decided on getting out of the way, and both immediately disappeared. Seaforth was known to have been in regular correspondence with the Prince, and to have sent private orders to the Lewis to have his men there in readiness ; and his friend impressed on him the necessity of getting out of sight for a time. They started through the mountains in the direction of Poolewe. Some days after, when in concealment near the shore, they saw, entering the bay, two ships, having on board many armed men, whom they recognised as Seaforth's followers from the Lewis, commanded by Captain Colin Mackenzie. Lord Seaforth had just finished dining, off a sheep's head, when he espied his retainers. Approaching the ships with the sheep's jawbone in his hand, he waved it towards them, and ordered them to return to their homes at Stornoway ; which command they obeyed. Coinneach's apparently ludicrous prophecy was fulfilled. The brave Lewis men had been turned back from battle by the jawbone of an animal smaller than an ass.

There are many of Coinneach's prophecies still running. They are all in the same strain. Most of them refer to bloody battles to be fought between the clans which in Coinneach's time were at variance. There is one "that the ravens shall stand on the three large stones at the south end of the Muir of Ord, and drink of the blood of the Mackenzies and Macdonalds, which

shall flow long and deep." There are similar prophecies regarding places in Sutherlandshire and in the Lewis. As to the Stone which gave Coinneach the gift of prophecy, the received tradition is that it lies at the bottom of Loch Ussie, and will remain there until the man is born on whom the mantle of the Prophet shall descend. The Prophet will be distinguished by physical peculiarities indicated by Coinneach, and he will find the magic Stone in the inside of a pike. It is asserted that a man possessing the peculiarities did appear some years ago ; but the Stone has not yet been found.

Some of the quaintest of Scotch superstitions are those which pertain to Hallowe'en, when all the lads and lassies, and older people, congregated at the shrine of some Wise Woman to learn what Fate had in store for them during the year. The most important questions generally related to affairs of the heart. The oracle was consulted with seriousness, and delivered her utterances with solemnity. Cutting an apple in two before a looking-glass, and watching with anxiety and fear to see whose face peered over your shoulder ; throwing a ball of thread out of the window, with the question "Who holds ?" and sowing any kind of seed in a dark corner of the garden, while repeating the rhyme—

"Hempseed I sew thee,  
My true love to know thee :  
Let he who is to marry me  
Come after me and harrow this,—"



may seem to us to have been absurd usages ; but, when we realize that the likeness or voice alternative to that of the wished-for lover was his Satanic Majesty it is not difficult to understand the terror with which young women regarded the ordeal. The important part of the evening's entertainment, however, was telling fortunes by reading the future in the shapes which the white of eggs assumed on being poured into a tumbler of water. The person gifted with the power of prophecy held the tumbler, while the person whose fortune was to be told placed her or his hand over the glass ; and the whole book of life was read from the fantastic forms in the water. Very solemn in the firelight were the faces of the listeners as the old wife foretold joy or sorrow, prosperity or misfortune. The most profound belief was accorded to her words. There was an Old Woman, deceased only ten years ago, living near Strathpeffer, in Ross-shire, who was supposed to possess this special power of divination ; and on Hallowe'en people flocked from all parts of the country to consult her. I once took some English people to see her. We had to come away with our curiosity ungratified. She had such a levee of people waiting for her to solve the riddles of their lives, she had no time to give to our party.

In all the minor superstitions and beliefs, the Devil played a very important part. He was always supposed to be the influence that marred some promising horoscope. The fairies, and smaller supernatural folk, all gave way to the greater power, and on the night of

Hallowe'en Satan had unhampered licence to pit himself against Providence and Love. One superstition of Hallowe'en, bearing the impress of the romantic melancholy so characteristic of the Highland character, is practised only in very remote parts of the country. The person who intends tempting the Spirits of Darkness must steal out unobserved to a field whose furrows lie due north and south, and, entering at the western side, must proceed slowly over eleven ridges, and stand in the centre of the twelfth. He will hear either sobs or mournful shrieks, which predict speedy death ; or the sounds of merriment and music, which foretell marriage. This experiment was not popular, and was seldom tried. Tradition told of girls who had gone out alone to make it, and had returned bereft of reason.

The belief in the Church having power to counteract the intentions of Evil Spirits had not much influence in the Highlands. A Free Church minister in the Lewis, Mr. MacRae, had, however, a curious story, which he often narrated, of the manner in which the depredations in the Lewis in very early times had been stopped by a priest, who went alone and confronted the great golden-haired Princess from over the seas, half-woman and half-witch, who was devastating the country. She came no one knew whence, more beautiful and glorious than the day, with golden hair covering her from head to foot. A great host came with her, and laid waste the country. No power could resist her. After every man who attempted to stand against her had been killed, the inhabitants appealed to the man of



God to see what holy help could do. Having, by tryst, met the Enchantress on a high cliff above the ocean on the wild coast of the island, he attempted to induce her to quit the country ; but his entreaties were unavailing. Scornfully, she told him she would not go while there was a man, or a woman, or a child, left. His attempts at persuasion being useless, the wily minister contrived to engage her in a fierce and angry controversy ; she receding to the edge of the cliff, he following her. Amid expostulations and entreaties, the progress continued ; and the Princess found, too late, that she had been driven on to a narrow point of the cliff, some hundred feet above the sea, from which there was no escape. Mad with passion, she hurled herself on the minister, intending to kill him with the spear she held in her hand ; but the holy man upheld the Sign of the Cross, and the Enchantress, with a shriek, which echoed through the island, fell backwards over the rocks into the boiling waters at the foot of the cliff ; and her hosts had disappeared before the deliverer of the island had returned to convey the joyful tidings to his people.

Another story of the power of the Church over spirits is told in Lochaber. The burial-ground of Cillechoireal (or St. Cyril) is on a beautiful hill-top on the mountain-side—the very ideal of a peaceful resting-place. Sleep there the Bard of Keppoch and the mighty hunter, MacDonald. Time was when the whole country was disturbed night after night by the shouts of supernatural combatants. Those who in

life had been enemies rose under the cloud of night to renew their feuds, and the clash of claymores was heard afar. The groans of the wounded, the cries of the vanquished, and the fiendish laughter of the victors, made the strongest hearts quake; the fearful were nearly dead with terror. At last, one stormy night, matters came to a crisis. Women shrieked; strong men prayed and crossed themselves. Over and above the noise of the raging elements the cries of the demoniacal warfare rang. Some thought the cause of the tumult was that a Protestant had been buried there, and the sanctity of the consecrated ground outraged. They implored the minister of Kilmonivaig to remove the body. The minister, with great caution, said that he thought it would be a pity to remove a brave man who was evidently holding his own against such a host, and refused to interfere. Then it occurred to the people to get the ground reconsecrated, and on this terrible night a man strong in faith volunteered to go and fetch the priest. He arrived safely at the house, and told his tale. The priest, who was a very devout man, instantly set out for the scene of the dreadful *mêlée*. In crossing the river Spean the man carried the priest on his back. Arrived on the farther shore, the priest took off one of his shoes, and filled it with water, which he consecrated; and after many prayers set off alone to the burying-ground, leaving the messenger in terror. In that dark and lonely hour the priest entered the scene of unholy warfare, and reconsecrated the ground

amidst the yells of the disappointed spectres. From that day peace and silence reigned in Cillechoireal. "There at peace the ashes rest of those who once were foes."

The belief in witches and witchcraft seems now to have died away in the Highlands. In the very remote districts we do still hear of bewitchment ; but the cases are very rare. In the Autumn of 1858, we were living in a small farmhouse on the shore of Loch Broom. An old woman who lived in a broken-down ruined cottage near us was reputedly a witch. She was one of the most hideous hags I ever beheld, and, although apparently harmless, was most vindictive. She conceived a violent dislike to the cook, with whom she quarrelled, and vowed she would be avenged for some fancied insult. One day we were met by faces of great consternation, and told that the woman had bewitched the cows, which would give no milk. There was no possibility of procuring milk elsewhere ; and, as the difficulty of feeding small children was thus become serious, it was considered best to appease the witch. Some conciliatory measures were adopted, and the Old Woman promised to repair the mischief she had done. The cows were accordingly brought into the byre from the hill-side ; and the hag, with a large black bottle containing some mysterious fluid she had prepared, a bag of simples, and her stool, was shut in with them. I well remember being allowed to peep in at the window, to see her sitting on her stool behind the cows, rocking herself backwards and forwards, and crooning a

weird song ; but it was only a glimpse, for every one was enjoined to keep far away and leave her in peace. At the end of about half-an-hour she appeared, assuring us that the spell was removed, and that the cows would soon be all right ; which they undoubtedly were, for in the course of an hour or two they gave milk readily and abundantly. The servants and neighbours believed devoutly that some supernatural power had been invoked, and that the old hag was a medium. There was a sceptical piper, however, who avowed that the want of milk on that particular morning had been due to a natural cause, and that had the cows been watched while feeding on the hill-side a substantial fairy, the Old Woman's daughter, might have been seen milking them. That was the only doubt I ever heard cast on what was considered a remarkable instance of witchcraft.

It is curious to contrast the belief of the Highlanders of the past with the scepticism of the race to-day. There has been a marked change on the Highland character during the last fifty years. The blind devotion to King and Chief, which made no task impossible, no sacrifice too great, has lapsed. The old families have died away. The old territorial families and clans are scattered, and we have in their place new races of lairds and tenants. The causes are not far to seek. The Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 had well-nigh exhausted the resources of the country, and it longed to be at peace. The last representative of the Royal family of Scotland was a *fainéant*, and unworthy of the

blood spilt for him. The English Government, wisely in the end, but cruelly at the time, determined to stamp out all feelings of nationality that were left. It succeeded. As the country became opened up, and southern influences were brought to bear on the Highlanders, they accepted civilized conditions of life, and turned their energies into fresh directions. The clearances for deer forests and sheep farms, and the emigration which followed, broke the last link in the feudal chain. The Highlanders' Chief became only their landlord, and ceased to be their Father. The Highlanders are wealthier, more prosperous, and perhaps more contented ; but the spirit of their poetry is dead, and all that gave romance to Scottish life is gone. We have sad evidence of this when we look upon the ruined sheilings, which tell of the fulfilment of Coinneach's prophecy that "the day will come when the big sheep and deer will overrun the country till they shall strike the Northern Sea."

## LONDON SOCIETY.

It would be difficult to point exactly to the beginning of the change which has been gradually transforming London Society ; but the death of the Prince Consort and the withdrawal of the Queen from public life certainly mark an epoch. The long mourning and seclusion of the Court was really the abdication of the Queen as the visible head of Society. Since then the social revolution has been advancing, and the few gatherings which the Queen honours by her presence indicate vividly the change of which we have spoken. No one other than those whom she knows or expresses a desire to see is brought into personal contact with the Sovereign ; but the gatherings are cosmopolitan.

In a democratic country like England, any Government, whether Whig or Tory, is largely composed of self-made men, who, with their families and belongings, gratify the keenest of ambitions, that of "getting into Society," with a facility that was impossible fifty years ago, in the days before the passing of the Reform Bill. When the Government was entirely in the hands of Whigs and Tories, Society was essentially aristocratic and exclusive, the members of each Ministry and their

subordinates being men of birth, who belonged naturally to the society in which they moved ; but with the extension of enfranchisement the middle classes claimed some of the social advantages of what had thitherto been known as the ruling classes. Such a social recognition was a prize highly valued and dearly bought, and the price of the much-coveted invitation often meant a wavering vote. The wives of the leaders of political Parties were sparing and cautious in their hospitality, and the fate of a Government often hung on the issue of invitations to the house of the Prime Minister.

While Lord Palmerston was in office, Lady Palmerston wielded a political power little less than that of her husband. An invitation to her Saturday parties at Cambridge House was as eagerly sought for as any political reward. She was a strong partisan, and bestowed her hospitality only on her personal friends, warm adherents, and wavering opponents. She and Lady Derby divided the toil of Party entertainments ; but, during many years of Whig ascendancy, the business of dispensing social favours was briskest at Lady Palmerston's. The reunions were exclusively political. Men of the medical profession, of the bar, of the stage, even of letters, were seldom seen.

Lady Waldegrave was the first woman in a political position who opened her house to everyone, without distinction of Party. She scandalized the more exclusive of her friends ; but she helped to bring about the cosmopolitanism which is now the characteristic



of English Society. In her house everyone rubbed shoulders with celebrities. Politicians, doctors, barristers, actors, and actresses,—all found a welcome in her warm and kindly sympathy. No one has taken her place. Party feeling has run so strongly that no one else, probably, could have brought Jacobins, Conservatives, and Unionist Liberals into harmony within four walls. Since the secession of the Whigs from the Liberal Party, Liberal society has ceased to be ; but the task of gathering the scattered flock together has been taken up bravely by the wives of the few young Liberal statesmen whose brilliant futures are not yet things of the past.

London is so much larger and richer, the number of people who receive has so enormously increased, and the facilities for going into Society are so very much more ample, that invitations to the house of a great political leader are no longer sought after and intrigued for so eagerly. In fact, the centre of Society has changed. A large portion of it remains where it always has been, and its members have opened fresh fields of enterprise for themselves. Literature, art, and science, have advanced to positions new to them ; and a small section, but a very important one, has formed a society of its own—all the more important because it has the acknowledged leaders of Society at its head—and is exercising an influence on English life and character the effects of which we can as yet hardly estimate.

The tendency of Society in England is to grow large : indeed, to be unwieldy. London has become



the centre of the civilized world. It is the fashion to know everyone and to go everywhere, and the struggle to accomplish this feat inevitably expands Society. People have not the leisure to see their friends in a quiet, simple way, as formerly, when real intellectual pleasure was always to be found in certain small coteries. Life is too full and too busy ; and all persons with any pretence to social "smartness" find their engagements so numerous that their only way of seeing acquaintances is by inviting them to their house, where, packed together in a hot room, much too small for half their number, a surging crowd composed of the most opposite elements try to find enjoyment in the fact that they are in a room with an assemblage of people more or less interesting and distinguished, none of whom they know by sight, in whose existence, indeed, they never interested themselves until it became the fashion to invite the lions and make them roar. To the hostess of the nineteenth century such hospitality is a pain, and not a pleasure. If she is a person with some appreciation of the great qualities of her guests, it cannot be aught to her but an annoyance that she is unable to give every one of her friends the proper position and attention which he merits ; but she has no alternative. Her large acquaintance and her many engagements prevent her from showing hospitality in any other way.

The French salon has never found a counterpart in England. The inclination of the English, as regards society, is to eat, not to talk. Their conception of

social amusement connects itself with dinner, dress coats, and as much formality and state as possible. The simplicity of French Society, which meant dropping in during a given evening one day a week to a well-known house, where neither meat nor drink was provided, never commended itself to England. It found some adherents in the days of Miss Berry, whose house in Wimpole Street was for many years the haunt of all the most distinguished people of her time. Lady William Russell, the mother of the late Duke of Bedford, one of the most accomplished women of the day, surrounded herself with a society as pleasant as it was small, and, to the last day of her life, was always to be found in the evening in her house in Audley Square. Lady Jersey, Lady Sandwich, Lady Granville, and Lady Ashburton, were the only *grandes dames* who in English Society ever tried to imitate the salon; and their *entourage* was very small. Their aristocratic prejudices were too strong to admit anyone outside the charmed circle, and many of the most distinguished men of their time lived and died unknown to them.

Whatever may be the reproach of the end of the nineteenth century, a want of appreciation of distinction in any mode is not one. There never was an age when fame of any kind was more of a "cult." To have a good cook; to be a smartly-dressed woman; to give magnificent entertainments, where a fortune is spent on flowers and decorations; to be the last favoured guest of Royalty,—those are among

the qualifications. It must be admitted that they are not high.

Luxury, ease, comfort,—the modern ideals—are undermining our Society as surely as they sapped that of Rome. We have become very rich, and we have a large leisured class whose only occupation is amusement. Men and women who live for pleasure, and have no sense of the obligations of life, are becoming the parents of young England ; and the example of their lives is before the children, who are expected to carry on the traditions of which our race is proud. The influences of which we speak are perhaps less felt among boys than among girls. School-life still develops the manhood of England. Luxury in the early preparatory schools is increasing ; but the rough-and-tumble life of the public schools counteracts its influence, and gives boys the knocking-about which is necessary for the development of the hardier qualities of man's character. The battle of life—the struggle in all professions—is so keen that it brings out a man's strongest aptitudes, and the competition he has to meet, which is becoming harder every year, makes him proof against enervating influences. Still, Society—the tone of Society—is not governed by men. It is governed by women ; and as women are virtuous or the reverse, so is their *entourage*.

It would be idle to deny that certain changes in London Society, which are too conspicuous to be overlooked, are only the outcome of the easy-going manner in which women of the highest rank and culture have allowed

old-fashioned rules to be relaxed. The decay of restraints has been almost imperceptible; but the spirit of liberalism in all affairs, social, political, religious, has swept away the reserve and illusions of our forefathers.

Nowhere is this more conspicuous than among girls, whose lives are as different from those of their grandmothers as dusk is different from darkness. Respect for parents, the habit of self-denial, and the modest reserve which used to be the characteristic of the "English miss," have disappeared. Parents and children now meet nearly on an equality; but where there is any inferiority it is on the parental side. The young lady of to-day reads the newspapers, and what books she chooses; and discusses with equal frankness the freshest scandal and the latest French mode; she rides in the Park often unattended by a groom, but generally with a cavalier; she drives alone in hansoms; she dances with men who do not care to be presented to her mother; and she leaves her chaperon, not to dance with the enjoyment of girlhood, but to retire to some leafy corner of the ball-room, where she can (to use the modern phrase) "sit out," while her distraught parent "sits up." She spends her own money, and dresses as she likes, and more often than not spends more than she can afford. Her stay in London is one round of pleasure from morning to night, varied during the autumn and winter by country visits which are only a repetition of London on a small scale; and, whilst some years ago girls would go anywhere for

a dance, now they desire to go only to the best balls and to be with the smartest people.

The reason for the change in English girlhood is to be found in the fact that for many years they have not had, as far as regards Society, a "good time." The young married women are formidable competitors. In dress, in conduct, in conversation, and often in knowledge, therefore, they copy their envied rivals; or, attaching themselves to some smart young married woman, they profit by what she squanders in the prodigality of her success.

Howsoever great the difficulties girls find in entering the social lists, they are much more hardly handicapped in the matter of dancing, and still more in that of marrying. Nothing is more comical than to see the devices to which ball-givers resort to get men to come to their houses and when there to dance. Everything is done to tempt them. Balls begin at midnight, because the *jeunesse dorée* of England will not dance early; a *recherché* supper and the best of wines are provided; and long before midnight patient rows of sleepy chaperons and anxious girls await the arrival of the young Adonis, who, after scornfully surveying the serried ranks through his eye-glass from the end of the ball-room, retires below to eat and drink, and, having thus done his duty, goes back to his club. What is true of dancing is true as regards marrying. Knowing the life of ease and comfort which is the lot of most girls, men who are poor, perceiving that marriage would entail an amount of denial and sacri-

fice they do not feel able to undertake, abstain from the altar. When there is great affection the case is different, and hand in hand man and woman face the struggle together; but when the gold is not sufficient to provide more than bread and butter, the nineteenth century takes away much of the poetry and romance which gild the pathway of life.

Parents, besides, feel, naturally, that when a man has no profession or prospects which will ultimately increase the income he can offer their daughter, marriage would not only be unwise but wrong. The effect is that girls marry later, and often with a better prospect of happiness. Still, girls do not marry as easily or as well as formerly, and the confidante of fashionable mothers will bear me out in saying that the universal cry is, "The men won't marry." The New Man shows no respect whatever for the theorem of Mr. Disraeli that England will never be right until all the youth of it is married at twenty-one and all the beauty at nineteen.

The increased cost of living and the difficulty that men with small incomes have in marrying affect other classes in England; but in the middle and the professional classes the improved education which women receive opens careers to them other than the domestic ones; and their choice of husbands is wider. It is the cost of living up to a certain position that has driven so many of the daughters of the aristocracy to make marriages among men in business, and it is one of the principal causes of the democratization that is

going on so rapidly in England. Money is the idol of to-day ; without it life is ugly, hard, wearisome ; and, if with it the romance and poetry of existence fly away, it helps to grease the wheels of the coach, and softens down many angularities. It has been said that everything can be bought but health. That is nearly true. Wealth is a great power, either in use or in abuse ; it is the cause of success in the smartest London society. No words more desperately true than those of the Poet Laureate of our nineteenth century life were ever written :

“ Every door is barred with gold,  
And opens but with golden keys.”

If we take up a Society paper which chronicles the fashionable doings of the week, we find that the smartest and most magnificent entertainments are not those given by the *haute noblesse* of England. They are those given by a host of people, many of whose names are foreign, who thirty years ago would not have been heard of outside their provincial neighbourhoods. To their houses flock the leaders of what was once, not long ago, the most exclusive society in Europe. The atmosphere heavy with the perfume of flowers, the spoils of the Riviera ; the bewitching voice of the last fashionable prima donna, brought at a fabulous price ; the delicacies of the supper room ; the banquet with its priceless wines—these are the temptations which the crowd of magnificently dressed and beautiful women and blasé



men cannot resist ; and such is the nightly spectacle offered to any observer of what we term the " smart set " of London Society. The patronesses of Almack's must turn in their graves at the thought.

When the best passport into the highest society in England is unlimited wealth, and it is much easier to join in the funeral chorus of regret at its degeneration than to take any active part in counteracting its influence, is it to be wondered at that deterioration is going on ? To those who feel seriously and deplore the effect which the recognition of the new elements which now compose Society in England must have, the position is one of great difficulty. There is a great difference between an affectation of being shocked and a genuine sorrow over much that is going on around us.

The agricultural depression, and the necessity for retrenchment enforced on all the smaller landlords, obliging them to shut up their houses and live in reduced state, or to come to London, where, in spite of its luxury, it is easy to be poor, have destroyed a strong counteracting influence, which, while it lasted, exercised some restrictions.

It must not, however, be supposed that there is no society in England save that which we have described. There is still a larger and more important one : in which we find happy families, where duty and responsibility are unimpaired. There has never been a time in England when there was so strong a feeling of the obligation to poorer brethren which riches entail, or when

charity was more generous. The class to which we refer are a resistance to the influence of the other strata of Society.

It is not only from the widespread and general luxury of the richer class of England, their extravagance and their freedom, that the evil which we deplore arises. It is also from the example of the upper classes, which insensibly spreads below. How can we chide and condemn the vices of the poor when the example set them by the rich is what we see? Surely, we must feel infinite pity for the outcast women of the world who sin because they must live, while there can be nothing but a feeling of horror for women who set their virtue so low as to make it the price of dresses which will "cut out" the toilettes of other women; nor can we have any but a feeling of contempt for the men who, marrying on small means, suddenly find their whole *entourage* changed by the addition of horses and carriages, French cooks, and all the modern luxuries of a fashionable *ménage*, and shut their eyes and regard the transformation with philosophical calmness. In all societies there are men and women low enough to accept such positions; but in England thirty years ago such a thing would have been impossible, and no man or woman occupying it would have dared to appear in Society. "*Autres temps autres mœurs.*" With so many examples of the tolerance of the world and the complaisance of husbands, we cannot wonder that some of the modern developments of Society have created a condition which respectable

English opinion considers a reproach and a danger to the country.

The decay of religious belief in English Society is beginning to have effect in a lapse of some of the strongest restraints to which human nature can be subjected. In the great waves of passion which sweep across the lives of men and women, religion has not always been an unfailing protector ; but insensibly it controlled inclinations which would have been calamitous had they been yielded to. Modern Thought is changing the aspect of life, and, with it, the relations of men and women. The spread of education among women and "emancipation" will work still greater changes, all in the direction we deplore ; and, unless some unforeseen event diverts the current in which Society is moving, public opinion will insist on its reconstruction, and the lines of demarcation which now divide it will become more clearly defined. The "smart set" will follow its inclination, which is towards the gratification of every whim of the moment. The other, with certain ideals of duty, will, as now, endeavour to realize its responsibilities, and, being the strength of the country, will always be a power against baneful social influences. Fortunately for England, the mass of opinion will be sound ; but, unfortunately, owing to the glamour shed over "smartness" by rank and riches, the smart may long continue to be the fashionable set.

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The fact that the foregoing reflections were published in an American Review has excited some of my critics. No people are so intimate with our faults and shortcomings as our transatlantic cousins are, and it is felt that I ought not to have made them our confessors. Lady Frances Balfour has piled up a terrible indictment on this score. That was unnecessary. The Americans know more about us than we know of ourselves. London has become to Americans what Paris used to be. They cannot visit us in their thousands, go into Society, be welcomed and fêted as they are, and have many relations and friends married and settled in England, without being acquainted with all our vices as well as with a few of our virtues. There is a set into which they do not go, in whose existence they hardly believe, to which little of what I have written applies ; but they draw their conclusions from what they see of the set in which it is the successful ambition of many of them to move ; and, if I have pointed out the characteristics of that set, I have not, I suspect, done more than enable many Americans to verify what their own observation, or the information of their friends, had already suggested. Indeed, I will admit that one of my reasons for addressing American readers was to tell them what (I hope) is thought by not a few in England of that special part of Society which appears to them the most admirable,

as it certainly is the most conspicuous. If it is the ideal of any of them, let it, at any rate, be said that there are Englishmen and Englishwomen who are not blind to its faults ; and let them not imagine that if they achieve admission to that glittering circle they are initiated into all the best life of England.

It is impossible, after what Lady Frances Balfour has said, to refrain from some reference to the influence exercised on Society by the Queen. No English man or woman, whatever his or her political opinions, could hesitate a moment in paying the tribute that is due to a Sovereign whose life has been devoted to the welfare of her people, her example one of the purest and noblest in the history of the world. The dull coarseness of the reigns of the early Georges, culminating in that of George IV., closed the pages of a story that one can dwell on with little satisfaction ; and the accession of a Queen ; who had led the simple, uneventful life of the English girl of those days gave promises which have been more than fulfilled. The nature of the Prince Consort was the best support to the impulsive and generous Queen, and, through the too short wedded life of the two, the Court of England presented as high an ideal of sovereignty as could well be imagined. During the long years of her mourning and seclusion, the sympathy of the country has gone out to the Queen ; and her people have never forgotten the fact that, howsoever irksome, and at whatever cost to herself, the welfare of the country has never been neglected for a moment, and that, in State affairs, the

Queen has been as vigilant and hardworked as any of her Ministers. Her influence to-day is in many ways greater than during any period of her reign ; but not in the same direction. Fifty-six years of devotion to her people has intensified the hold she has always maintained over their affections, and no one who was fortunate enough to witness the grand procession on her Jubilee day can doubt how deep and lasting their loyalty is. On the other hand, no one can deny that the restraining influence over Society which her presence exercised has practically ceased.

It is true that in one important particular the power of the Sovereign is as great as ever. It is still she who sanctions the formal admittance of persons into Society by allowing them presentation at Court. The exercise of such power and its jealous retention are a real safeguard to Society, and, administered as they now are, constitute a tribunal of honour which satisfies every one. Apart from this, however, the individual influence of the Sovereign over Society and its leaders cannot seriously be said to remain to any appreciable extent. Then, even the qualification of presentation has, in point of exclusiveness, ceased to be critical. One important change is in the number of those wishing to be presented, which was more than doubled in thirty years. Now the restriction is elastic. If a person is not palpably objectionable in reputation, there is no reason against his being presented at Court. The relaxation is sufficient to account for the presence in London Society of many

persons who could not have entered it thirty years ago.

The Queen is kept well-informed of the events of the great world, and is said to have a very accurate knowledge of what occurs ; but there the supervision ends. Howsoever much she may wish to express approval or dissatisfaction, she cannot do so in the unmistakable yet quiet manner in which she could signify her opinion of persons and things if she were constantly brought into actual contact with them. None of the pageantry of the most brilliant Court is ever wanting on State occasions in England ; but the absence of the Queen and her *entourage* has done more to democratise English Society than any of the other causes which have helped to bring about the changes. The influence of the Queen's private life, while appealing strongly to the country at large, and endearing her to the whole of her people, is much more potent among the masses, among whom the feeling towards her is one of deep chivalrous sentiment, than it is among the various sets of Society who take their cue from others more exalted than themselves. It is obvious that as long as she abstains from taking her recognised place in Society the Sovereign can have little control over the heterogeneous mass of which it is now composed. There can be no disloyalty in admitting the indisputable.

Still, one must in fairness say that the sentiment of loyalty to the Queen is in a great measure due to her seclusion from the bustle of public life. It may be that the policy which she has pursued for so many



years was dictated by a sagacious knowledge of her people, who, in her isolation, with its pathetic dignity, see only a Sovereign whose life presents an idyll : a Queen who, surrounded with all the grandeur and power of a great empire, chooses to work unwitnessed for her people's welfare, never relaxing her labours in their behalf.

Mr. Mallock says that the nucleus of London Society still "consists of our old landed families, the most important of which enjoy 'high titular rank.'" That is so ; but the nucleus is so small that it is almost lost in the accretions. Many of the old landed families have suffered so much from depression in agriculture and from financial crises that, ceasing to direct and control Society, they have become dependent for their amusements on the new oligarchs of wealth. Conscious that competition is impossible, they have shown no want of alacrity in availing themselves of what their new hosts are willing to offer for social recognition.

Mr. Mallock thinks that London, like a university or a public school, is divided into many sets wholly independent of one another. From what I am told, I am not prepared to assent to his view that a college, at least, if not a university, or a public school, does not take its tone from a particular set. I should, however, have thought it beyond question that in London almost every set, whatever its special "cult," looks up to and is influenced by the set favoured by the acknowledged leaders of Society. In London a large section of Society is interested in knowing who are the friends

and intimates, and what are the occupations and pursuits, of the Royal Family, and of the "smartest" people in the "upper ten;" and with none is this interest more intense than with the new oligarchs of wealth, to whose influence Mr. Mallock ascribes the decadence of Society.

The great increase of commercial wealth and the large number of new families it has brought into existence have undoubtedly contributed largely to the changes we are discussing; but they have not contributed to so great an extent as to make them entirely responsible. Luxury was not unknown among the aristocracy before the rise of the rich middle class, and there are many great families who are even now suffering from the lavish expenditure of their forefathers, in whose day merchant princes were rare. Nothing has been more faithful (I might say more obsequious) than the imitation by the new families of the life of the great families with whom they compete. Who has not watched with amusement the growth of the family tree, the gradual multiplication of ancestors on the walls, the establishment of the piper in an old Scotch castle, now tenanted by some millionaire from Mincing Lane? The sideboard groaning with gold and silver plate, and the footmen resplendent in yellow and crimson liveries, are only a few of the indications of the zeal with which the new power has adopted the outward aspect of the old. The trappings of wealth and rank, which fitted a class rich with the traditions of aristocracy, and have always been accepted as part

of its rôle, are adopted by its imitators just as the jay in the fable took the discarded feathers of the peacock to decorate himself.

Where there were position and wealth there was always luxury ; and, where they have survived the shock of agricultural and other financial depression, it is still to be found in the homes of the bluest blood in England. It is not a monopoly of the *nouveaux riches* or of the "strangers within our gates." It is the fashion to talk of the tendencies of this century as novel in English history. The democratization of Society is now more rapid than hitherto ; but it should never be forgotten that it is a characteristic of the English aristocracy, as distinguished from that of France, of Austria, of Spain, of Russia, and, to a less extent, of Italy, that it has rested on foundations other than those of territorial possessions alone. The names of many of the English nobility recall those of men who in law or in commerce laid the foundations of families which are now among the oldest and most dignified in England. Unlike the countries to which I have referred, we have always recognized and accepted any man of commanding ability, whatever his birth or origin, and, as a matter of course, have admitted him to all the privileges of the social order to which he had raised himself. The aristocracy of the bar, of letters and other arts, of commerce, and of the sword, have become so welded with our territorial aristocracy that we cease to remember whence they came, knowing that, by high character and ability, they fairly won their elevation ; and many names of

which Englishmen are proudest are those which testify that there is no position so high and honourable that an Englishman of character and talent may not attain to it. We have also, however, been jealous and careful that only the most worthy should receive the honours and the social recognition to which their personal qualities entitle them ; and that feeling, whilst not an unfailing barrier, has prevented any great abuse of the privilege, apart from cases of political favour. While the lines were strongly defined, and a man was rewarded for his individual merit, the women belonging to him rarely, if ever, shared his good fortune, except as regards his title, their social recognition never following as a right ; and only after many years of patient struggle, if ever, did his family rise to the same position as its head. To quote only two well-known instances : I should say that neither Lady Peel nor Lady Beaconsfield was ever on the same terms of easy intimacy with the *grandes dames* of the London world as their husbands were with men of rank. Nowadays, the position of the whole family rises, and, with a bright wife and plenty of money, a man may attain to any social position. His appearance, his past, his capacity, all are immaterial if his wife knows how to play her cards.

Mr. Mallock maintains that some other qualities besides the "gold that gilds" are necessary to insure social success, and goes so far as to say it is unattainable without them. I cannot agree with him. Some members of Society owe their entrance into it to their power to charm or to amuse, and the powers which charm

and amuse imply the possession of qualities always of some distinction ; but the masses of Society owe few of the triumphs they enjoy to their wit. They owe it, rather, to their wine and food ; and many a *cordon bleu* lays his head on his pillow every night with the satisfaction of knowing that his master and mistress would never be where they are but for his genius. Intellect, cultivation, and refinement, are still the characteristics of certain sets in London ; but there is a large and important section whose aims are pleasure, their desires the gratification of the moment.

— Perhaps the aristocracy of England has been wise in receiving the newcomers and profiting by their wealth and their willingness to pay for recognition. There is more worldly wisdom in sharing the pleasures provided for us in a more gorgeous and lavish manner than we could afford, and accepting the position boldly, than in shrouding ourselves in the ruined grandeur of a faded past, swathed in a poverty which, howsoever satisfactory to our *amour-propre*, must be deplorable in every other sense. We can easily afford to bestow a pitying admiration on the Faubourg St. Germain in its scornful isolation from fashionable Paris and the life which throbs around it ; but we are too philosophical to take that view of ourselves, and thankfully accept the good things which come in our way, feeling that life need not be wasted in the luxury of stately woe.

We are cynically logical, also. We accept the whole situation. The few barriers which regulated who could be known and where we should go have long

been swept away, and we go everywhere. Nothing could afford a more edifying text for my sermon than to cast one's memory back in a large, crowded drawing-room in London, and try to trace step by step the social victory which has crowned the persevering efforts of more than half the people in it to storm the citadel of Society : to recall the many rebuffs, the cold suspicions, and in many cases the affronts, heaped on them by those with whom they sought to be intimate. The reflections can hardly be pleasant to either side ; but there can be little doubt as to which has the advantage.

About the weaknesses and foibles of Society one might laugh and jest ; but it is not really a matter for jesting. Increasing luxury and love of pleasure are producing a decadence which we cannot but deplore. The relaxation of some of the rules for the guidance of Society is bringing about changes of which at this moment we hardly guess the danger. I will notice two. One, probably the most sinister, is the rapidity with which women are losing control over Society, and with it the respect due to them from men. The tone of conversation, the stories told in their presence, and the want of deference to them in the behaviour of men, are very significant changes. The other, upon which I have dwelt already, is the mercenary character attaching in an increasing measure to relations otherwise deplorable enough.

## DINNERS AND DINERS.

The feasts and banquets of former days are, mercifully for us in these later times, relegated to public occasions only, and are regarded as a doubtful pleasure by those who are obliged to partake of them. Hospitality, which used to be dispensed wholesale, is now spread over a larger and wider area ; but dinner has become the characteristic repast of England, and the giving of dinner is the way in which English people best like to entertain and show hospitality to their friends. In other countries hospitality is dispensed differently, although, indeed, among certain classes in society abroad dinner is as important an event as with us. In England both the size of our houses and our daily occupations prevent those who live in towns from receiving strangers as their guests. Our English country life represents our particular form of hospitality ; but in London we are driven perforce to confine it to the dinner-hour, and it is at an English dinner-table that we see one of the most pleasant aspects of English life. There is no prettier sight, none more characteristic of the ease and luxury in



which we live, than a large, well-arranged dinner-table in London ; and this is not in any way the monopoly of the rich, for nowadays, when the decoration of rooms is not expensive, when flowers are cheap, and the taste of Englishwomen has so much improved, it is in the power of every hostess to make her entertainment as pretty as she can desire. The clean white cloth, the sparkling glass, the shaded light, the smell of the fresh flowers, and the well-dressed women surrounding the table, form a brilliant centre to the finely decorated dining-rooms of many houses in London.

The dinner of to-day is different from that of thirty years ago, and the change is in every way an advantage. A long table, covered with empty silver *entrée* dishes, on each of which in due time eight *entrées* and joints, or even more, according to the number of guests, were deposited, to be solemnly taken round in turn, is the part most vividly impressed on one's memory. One had always the most profound pity for the host and hostess, who were obliged to carve the joints at their respective ends of the table, the duty in the hostess's case generally falling to the unhappy man who took her in to dinner, and, consequently, got no dinner himself. The cooking was heavy and coarse, and the food substantial. Quantity, not quality, was the characteristic of the repast. The art of carving was a necessary accomplishment, and it was wonderful to see the dexterity and neatness with which a good carver could minister to the wants of a large party from a joint of ordinary size. As dinner was served

upon the table, artistic cooks had great opportunity to devise pretty dishes, and there was always plenty of scope for their talents in the endless array of puddings, jellies, etc., which came at the end of the feast. To families possessed of fine plate, a dinner-table in those days was a magnificent sight, and the heavy cut-glass was also an embellishment. In houses where there is a fine collection of plate, it is even now always used for decorating the table. Nothing can be more gorgeous or brilliant than the display of silver and gold at Windsor at state dinners, when the Queen's plate, which is the finest in the world, is exhibited.

The custom of removing the tablecloth after dinner, and arranging the dessert on the plain mahogany table, has passed, and in many ways one regrets it. Nothing looked prettier than the brown mahogany table, burnished almost to the brilliancy of a looking-glass, covered with large silver dishes of fruit, and silver candelabra, with its fringe of bright colour from the dresses of the women sitting round it. The modern fashion of covering the table with flowers has made the retention of this custom impossible, and it is seen now only in houses where an old mahogany table is still looked on as a precious relic of the ancient customs.

In former days the real business of the evening only began with the removal of the cloth and the retirement of the ladies. Not until then did the men of the party really devote themselves to what was considered the important part of the evening's amusement. The host

produced the treasures of his cellar for his guests, and they in turn gave up a large portion of the evening to their consumption. In fact, dinner was an event which culminated in a "heavy drink." The wines were richer than those of these days, and much more wine was drunk after dinner. Champagne, sherry, claret, and burgundy, were drunk during the meal; the two latter, as well as port, during dessert. There was no smoking after dinner, for cigarettes were unknown; and so, facing a phalanx of bottles in silver stands, the men drank on steadily during the evening. How well one remembers the long time after dinner, when all the jokes and scandal were exhausted, and in sheer desperation a "little music" was proposed in the vain hope that the warbling sounds might tempt the faithless from their revelry! Champagne has nowadays taken the place of heavier wines, and is drunk almost universally during and after dinner. The possessors of fine cellars may grumble, as they do, at the degeneracy of to-day; but after a cigarette and a glass or two of champagne every one wants to get to the drawing-room, and many are the complaints one hears of the bottles of claret opened after dinner and left untouched.

The serious, dull, heavy, and expensive dinner had its doom sealed when the custom of serving dinner *à la Russe* became the fashion. The conservatism of English society would have struggled much longer against the innovation but for the fact that its adoption considerably reduced the expense of entertaining. In-

stead of heavy joints, endless *entrées* and puddings, a dinner consists of as little or as much as the hostess feels inclined to give. The trouble of carving is obviated, and in all ways the fashion is a distinct improvement. For some years old-fashioned people struggled against it, and even now there are houses where the host still clings to his old prejudices; but the instances are so few that one can hardly name them. With the introduction of dinners *à la Russe* the art of cooking changed, and the lighter but richer *cuisine* of the French was adopted; but the time of transition was trying, as the English cookery of some thirty years ago was very bad, and for one dinner to rejoice over there were hundreds to be bewailed.

Let us be thankful that the period of transition is passed, and that English people have realised that good plain cooking is infinitely to be preferred to an ambitious bad French *cuisine*, and that a good plain dinner is within the reach of every one. The National School of Cookery at South Kensington has done something towards improving the English *cuisine*. It is still worse and more extravagant than that of any other country; and, although it is not nearly so bad as it was, there is great room for improvement. Our dinners are much too long, and we give too much to eat. Persons dining alone would never dream of consuming the amount of food they eat every time they dine out, and there can be no sound reason why any one should eat more in company than when alone. Already efforts are being made to reduce the quantity of food and the time taken

to consume it, and dining at half-past eight, as we do now, must help to shorten the feast ; otherwise a dinner would last well on into the night.

No dinner should consist of more than eight dishes, soup, fish, *entrée*, joint, game, sweet, *hors-d'œuvre*, and perhaps an ice ; but each dish should be perfect of its kind, and no dinner should last more than an hour and a quarter if properly served. Instead of this, dinners are constantly two hours long, and we double this quantity of food. Can anything be more wearisome, tiring to the digestion, and wearing to one's self and one's neighbours, than two hours' conversation with no chance to escape, without even the privilege, if one is bored, of being silent ? Even the greatest wit, the most brilliant *raconteur*, becomes monotonous after such a trial. Nothing can be in worse taste than a heavy repast, served with great ostentation, at which the guests are made to feel that their duty is to devote themselves to the task of cleaving their way through all the tedious dishes.

There are some houses, indeed, where the dinner is proverbially so good that to expect to be amused and also well fed is to be guilty of real ingratitude. In others, although gastronomically one does not fare so well, one is better entertained. Bad dinners are becoming exceptional. The average cooking in England has so much improved that one rarely runs the risk of being poisoned, and the incongruity of society prevents one from being insufferably dull.

A really pleasant dinner-party ought never to be

very large ; but the rapidly increasing size of London society almost entirely precludes people who entertain a great deal from enjoying the pleasure of a small one. The golden rule of hospitality was wont to be that one should not dine at the house of any person whom one did not intend to invite in return. Howsoever strictly people may still adhere to that rule, the size of society makes dinners, as well as all other forms of entertainment, large. The number of guests is generally limited only by the size of the dining-room. The traditionally ideal dinner, which ought to consist of eight or ten people at a round table, well known to one another, and all good talkers, so that the conversation may be general, has become a dream of the past ; and in its place we have the large dinner of to-day, at which general conversation is out of the question, and one is limited, in talk, to one's immediate neighbours.

Sometimes, where there is space, two tables are a pleasant way of dividing guests, and of diminishing the sense of oppression which a very large dinner always gives. We have not adopted the plan with alacrity in England. Many persons object to it from an idea that the company at the other table is more amusing than their own ; and others object when the tables are multiplied (as they sometimes are) on the ground that the place is like a restaurant. Still, it is in many respects a better way than arranging the dinner at the large ordinary table, where anything like general conversation is out of the question. Conversation can be more or less general at a table of eight guests, or

ten, or twelve ; besides, this is a less formal mode of entertainment. The great length of dinners in London, and their lateness, have been mainly brought about by the lateness of the hour at which after-dinner society begins. No one goes to a ball before midnight, and the evening has to be got through in some way or other. Thus, dinners grow later every year. Now a quarter-past eight is the usual invitation, and half-past eight or a quarter to nine is not too liberal an interpretation of the bidding.

The composition of a dinner-party is very important. It is always a mistake to compose a party entirely of intellectually brilliant persons. They are generally envious, critical of one another, and therefore not to be seen at their best. One generally finds that the pleasantest dinners are those composed of average persons. A brilliant galaxy of guests gives a dinner a certain distinction ; but it is as likely as not to be a dull party. I have a very vivid recollection of a dinner-party composed of persons every one of whom was distinguished. A prime minister, two cabinet ministers, a distinguished soldier, one of the greatest ecclesiasts of the day, a brilliant scientific man, a great journalist, a distinguished lawyer, together with agreeable and pretty women, made up a company which at first sight seemed to promise a rare feast of intellectual delight. One of the guests declared it the dulllest dinner he had ever endured. If such were always the case, one would despair of the arrangement of any dinner, and indeed the conviction is often inevit-



able that a judicious mixture of ordinary with brilliant persons affords on the whole the best chance. Among many guests a brilliant talker is thrown away. It is only at a small table, when all the guests can hear and see, and, if required, add their *quota* to the general flow of conversation, that such a person accentuates the general enjoyment; although it should not be forgotten that very often such a guest frightens others less brilliant than himself, absorbing all the attention, and stifling the efforts, of his companions. What is required at dinner is that every one should be quick and sufficiently well educated to keep up the battledore and shuttlecock of small-talk, and that no one should be so much more brilliant and egotistical as to swamp every other person's individuality.

If we were to ask the majority of men what they consider the dullest kind of dinners, they would certainly name those where there are no women; and women would naturally express the same opinion as regards dinners of their own sex only. The former is, of course, common enough, as business and professional men give such dinners, and there are many occasions when they are unavoidable. Women's dinners are not customary yet; nor, indeed, have they been much tried in England. Now and then venturesome women have attempted to gather together a few enterprising sisters and have banished the male element; and, despite the chaff and ridicule of the "lords of the creation," the parties were pleasant enough. With higher education and greater freedom

of thought and conversation, the society of intelligent women in England is sufficiently enjoyable without the presence of men. This, I know, is an opinion in which there is no general concurrence. We have been brought up with the conviction that entertainment is incomplete without men; and, as the hour of dinner, the arrangement, the care bestowed on it, and the improvement of cooking, have all grown out of that feeling, it requires courage to deny the general assumption.

Girls are much more generally invited to dinners now than formerly, and they appreciate the change; but that, again, is the result of the great changes that have come over the intellectual position and interest of women in England. Thirty years ago, few girls would have chosen a dinner in preference to a ball; now there are hundreds who would not hesitate a moment as to their choice of the dinner, for the range of thought and conversation is so wide, the subjects of discussion are so varied, that a well-educated girl is able to see the symposium through without adversity. The presence of pretty girls enlivens a dinner-table, and no man, howsoever great and clever, need fear being bored by having a girl his neighbour.

The old saying as regards giving dinners in London, "Cutlet for cutlet," has, fortunately, long ceased to be true. No one is invited to dinner only because a dinner is expected in return. People are invited for every reason but that, and it is in the mixture and variety we meet at a dinner-table that the secret of its success rests. This gives it piquancy; and interests, and even animosi-

ties, political differences, and social bitterness, disappear under the soothing influence of "*Crème de volaille*, woodcock, Pommery, and cigarettes," and the pleasant society of pretty women. It is idle to deny that, of all social influences, none is more potent than the dinner-table. Every hostess will necessarily be careful not to invite impossible combinations ; but in England most people, howsoever divergent their opinions or occupations, forget differences under the softened light and soothing amenities of an agreeable dinner-party. The story of how the Speaker of the House of Commons, with rare tact, decided to waive the regulations about evening dress, and invited the Advanced Party in the House of Commons, who abjure general society, to dine with him at his official residence, is so well known that there is no indiscretion in alluding to it. One has heard over and over again how they met, and how, under the soothing influence of a good dinner, wine, and graceful hospitality, the conflicting elements passed an evening as unique as it was hilarious. Dinner is the great levelling institution of society. A party or a ball is an entertainment people are pleased at being invited to ; but nothing brings classes together, nothing levels distinctions, nothing gives satisfaction, so much as dining at the same table. Hospitality is dispensed widely and lavishly enough in England, and the houses of the rich are open to the most cosmopolitan of crowds ; but with the enormously increasing size of society it is impossible to invite every one to dinner, howsoever hospitably we may be inclined. As I said

before, the excellence of the *cuisine* is a point not to be disregarded ; but, provided that the food is well-cooked, people never think of it in comparison with the society they meet. The saying, "I do not know what the dinner was like : I only know I enjoyed the evening very much," is the greatest tribute to the success of host or hostess in amusing friends.

The best test of popularity is the number of invitations to dinner which people receive, and, as dinners are exceeding in number every other entertainment, popular persons need rarely, if ever, dine at home ; their going out being simply limited to their powers of endurance and digestion. It must be this cause which has made it the fashion to give very long invitations to dinner. Five or six weeks is not unusual in the season, and three weeks or a month is the usual time. Some people are unprocurable except at such a distance of time. To the entertainer it does not practically matter on what day his dinner is given ; but the length of invitation often makes a refusal impossible ; and cruel fate, which so loves to play mischievous tricks with us, often sends another, if not more than one, pleasant invitation for a date to which we are bound. It is impossible, except for a Royal Command, to throw over a dinner invitation. It is the one social sin which we in England, who are indulgent enough in other respects, resent very keenly. Wednesdays and Saturdays are the days in London on which dinners are most frequent. They are the only evenings on which the House of Commons does not sit,

and it is impossible to get any member of the Government to dine on any other evening during the Session. On these evenings, therefore, the preponderance of guests is political. One of the few indications of the existence of Sunday observance in England still shows itself in the fact that few dinners are given on Sunday. The religious feeling against them still remains ; and among business men, lawyers, and such-like, the idea that Sunday should be indeed a day of rest is still very strong, while among servants there is a great dislike to Sunday festivities.

With the rapidly increasing size of society in England, it would be impossible for any kind of intimacy or friendship to grow up in the huge crowds where movement and conversation become more difficult daily ; and, therefore, dinner has become a more important and more frequent event in our social life. It is the easiest and quickest way of getting people together and of bringing into contact those who otherwise would never meet ; in some ways it is the most economical ; and on all sides it is accepted as the pleasantest mode of passing the few hours which our busy life affords for recreation. The real responsibility of a dinner must always rest on the hostess. She is the presiding genius of the feast ; and on her tact, cleverness, and discretion, its fortunes depend. The secret of being a good hostess lies very much in a woman's thoroughly enjoying society. If she is happy and amused, her satisfaction spreads. A nervous woman, or one who does not really enjoy

society, never makes her dinner pleasant. She is continually haunted by the thought that something will go wrong, or she is tired and bored; and her moods permeate. Nothing is more infectious than pleasure, or *ennui*; and a hostess makes or mars the party.

## CONVERSATION.

To be a good talker is a valuable accomplishment. An agreeable man, howsoever ugly he may be, is always popular, and if we were to ask a woman whether she would be beautiful or agreeable, she would choose charm. Beauty while it lasts gives a power which is indisputable; but if one were to apply the practical test, and place a merely beautiful woman in competition with an agreeable plain woman the latter would win the victory. The gift of conversation, which, to a certain extent, is natural, is one that can be cultivated. Children possess it. Their easy and unconscious friendliness makes them delightful companions; the freshness and originality of their views on all subjects is highly entertaining.

The gift of being agreeable is one which, whilst depending on natural causes, can be attained by personal effort. It is every one's duty to try to please, and it is a duty singularly well rewarded. Great learning and high ability are constantly unappreciated because the owner of the greater qualities lacks the lighter and more congenial, which attract and retain the attention of society.



A person who talks well need not necessarily possess great mental gifts. The qualities necessary are varied. A few are pre-eminent. Among them we should note : (1) a soft voice ; (2) general knowledge ; (3) sympathy ; (4) social experience and adaptability. A soft voice and a low laugh are signs of breeding and education, which attract listeners and dispose them to be interested. A loud voice prejudices people, giving the impression, sometimes unjustly, that it denotes impatience, arrogance, and a desire to talk them down ; and, unfortunately, a harsh voice is often the accompaniment of qualities which, independently of it, render people unattractive. The coarseness of voice of the lower classes is largely due to the want of training during lesson time. If we observe the voices of the older generation who have not enjoyed the advantages of modern education, one is struck by the difference in the tone and in the key.

General knowledge, which comprises knowledge of the world, a varied acquaintance with books, and the sound education on which it must be built to be of real value, is indispensable. In the days of newspapers, magazines, and other publications which give an easy acquaintance with so many subjects, the temptation to be superficial is overwhelming. While so many fall into the temptation, it requires great intellectual effort to keep abreast of the stream and maintain the standard of real knowledge. In the kaleidoscopic mass of subjects which interest us, and the fulness of our modern life, a certain acquaintance with most of them

is necessary for any one aspiring to any kind of intellectual standard.

The greatest charm is a sympathetic nature, that keen indescribable quality which puts one *en rapport* with the person to whom one is speaking, and enables one to understand the other's point of view. The quality is negative. It does not entail brilliancy of conversation, or quickness of repartee. Only, it insensibly supplies the influence which insures good talking. One may describe it as modesty or diffidence, the possessor of which, while holding aloof from any personal part in conversation, by an apt remark, or a gentle suggestion, directs the current into which conversation flows. One has often heard it said of some of the most successful talkers, that they did not do much of the talking themselves, but directed its course, and that they were able to make everyone appear brilliant and witty, while saying hardly anything themselves. Certainly, among many of those who have had the reputation of being the leaders of any intellectual society it is true that they have constantly been more remarkable for silence than for speech.

Social experience, whilst important, is useless unless accompanied by adaptability. The weak point of clever people is often an inability to adapt themselves. They may have wide knowledge on a subject; but that is the limit of their powers, and outside of it they are dull. Modern society, bringing people of every class into contact, has largely increased the field of subjects, and the best talkers are those who are cosmo-

politan. A good memory is necessary to good talking ; so is the sense which seizes on the light and amusing aspects of life. Want of humour is a grievous fault. How often has one listened wearily to conversations interesting in many ways but lacking in the sense of fun ! Humour is often divorced from great ability, and is seldom consistent with strong convictions.

That the art of conversation has always been considered important is shown by the frequent references to it in works treating of the qualities which help to insure success in life. "Discretion of speech," Lord Bacon says, in his *Essays*, "is more than eloquence ; and to speake agreeably to him with whom we deale is more than to speake in good words or in good order, . . . He that questioneth much shall learn much, and content much ; and especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh ; for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge." Lord Chesterfield's advice might be followed with advantage. "Of all things," he says, "banish egoism out of your conversation, and never think of entertaining people with your own personal concerns. . . The jokes, the *bons mots*, the little adventures which do well in one company, will seem flat and tedious when related in another. . . . Talk often, but never talk long ; in that case, if you do not please, at least you are sure not to tire your hearers. . . . Take rather than give the tone of the company you are in. . . .

There is a certain social respect necessary ; you may start your own conversation with modesty, taking care, however, *de ne jamais parler des cordes dans la maison d'un pendu*. . . . I need not, I believe, advise you to adapt your conversation to the people you are conversing with. . . . A man of the world must, like the chameleon, be able to take a different hue ; which is by no means criminal nor abject, but a necessary complaisance, for it relates not only to manners but to morals." The astute man of the world realised the value of manners. "All the above rules," he says, "will lose half their effect if unaccompanied by the graces. Whatever you say, if you say it with a supercilious, cynical face, or an embarrassed countenance, or a silly, disconcerted grin, will be ill received. . . . If your air and address are vulgar, awkward, and *gauche*, you may be esteemed, indeed, if you have great artistic merit, but you will never please. Venus among the ancients was synonymous among the graces who were always supposed to accompany her ; and Horace tells us that even Youth and Mercury, the Gods of Art and Eloquence, would not do without her." Lord Chesterfield discourses cynically on the importance of adaptability in conversation, and gives hints to his son which, whilst important to the success of a young man starting in society, enabling him to read character and win popularity, are interesting as showing how much in conversation can be learnt of the character and weaknesses of those whom we associate with. "You will easily discover every man's vanity," he says, "by

observing his favourite topic of conversation;" and, "Women have in general but one object, which is their beauty, upon which scarce any flattery is too gross for them to believe." He advises the boy to read the pretty little French book, written by l'Abbé de Bellegarde, entitled *L'Art de Plaire dans la Conversation*; adding, "though I confess it impossible to reduce the art of pleasing to a system, yet this book is not wholly useless." In our day a distinguished and witty Irish professor has donned the mantle of Lord Chesterfield and given us a volume containing many discreet rules for the encouragement of good talk.

Modern life, while it has increased the field of conversation, has added to its embarrassments: it has brought us all into contact amid circumstances which make it necessary to take an apparent interest in one another. Lord Chesterfield maintains that every well-bred person should have no difficulty in beginning and continuing a conversation with anyone. He lived in a time when "well-bred" people seldom went into any society save their own, when there was no difficulty as to the choice of a subject. One of the trials of conversation is the initial one, the *premier pas*, which may be successful, or land you in greater difficulties; for the size of society brings so many people of different sets *en rapport* that a new-comer is often stranded as to the choice of a subject. The obligations which we owe to our ever-changing climate are innumerable.

A writer in *The Spectator* wittily compared the difficul-

ties of starting a conversation to the feelings of Alice in Wonderland when the necessity of having to make conversation begins to weigh heavily on her, and she hazards all sorts of little remarks and speeches which are necessitated by the variety of her unexpected and incongruous acquaintances. After starting many subjects, and steering clear of those she must avoid, she finds everything rambling off into bewildering mazes; and she cries out, pathetically, "This cannot be conversation: it sounds so dreadfully like nonsense." Thus, much talking that is done for the sake of talking is only nonsense. The consciousness that they have nothing to say urges people on to say something stupid. Starting a conversation with strangers is an art which plays a very considerable part in life.

It is difficult to compare French conversation with English. It has generally been accepted that the French are wittier, lighter, more versatile. French is a more expressive and more adaptable language than ours. One may fairly doubt, however, whether the most refined French conversation or the most brilliant oratory has ever equalled English spoken with the eloquence of Burke, or of Pitt, or, in our later days, of John Bright. The wits of Dublin have become brilliant memories, and the men whose names were household words have left no successors. The wrongs of Ireland have extinguished the lamp of wit.

Has the wide diffusion of knowledge made us more brilliant talkers than our ancestors in the days of Burke,

Sheridan, Walpole, Lord Chesterfield? We all talk now, and we all talk more; but do we talk as well? Is there as much originality of thought, as much brilliancy, as in the past? or is pleasant conversation now only the result of a superficial knowledge? The greater freedom in conversation has changed form and style. The variety of subjects is the most remarkable of all the changes that have come. The freedom with which we discuss religion, morality, and all social subjects, is the growth of a very short time; and questions more delicate are fast arising. One great change is in the very general part women take in conversation. They talk pleasantly. Women are quick, sympathetic, and keenly interested in the widening aspects of life; they read widely, their memories are good, and they bring to bear on many subjects not well-balanced opinions, but some that are often interesting and original. Women have pleasant voices, and are less egotistical than men, allowing the conversation to run naturally. Their conversation is vastly improved in its range of subjects. Personal matters and gossip always occupy a large place; but these are no longer the sole themes, and there are many people who rarely touch on such affairs at all. As the principal object of conversation is amusement, mental relaxation, pleasant idleness, it is almost impossible for any kind of social intercourse to ignore gossip entirely; and in its harmless forms it is agreeable enough. The gossip about remarkable people is absorbing. Who can hear anecdotes of Lord Beaconsfield, Bismarck, Mr. Gladstone, without in-



terest? and when have we ever had such a delightful volume as Boswell's *Life of Johnson*?

We have lost the coarseness of the eighteenth century; but whether the veiled frankness with which all social, moral, and religious matters are now discussed is an improvement is doubtful. Conversation between men and women is open and unrestricted, and the social problems which are becoming of engrossing interest are considered quite legitimate topics between them. The monopoly of such conversation is not that of the married women of the nineteenth century, who have at least earned a right to consider many social problems from an emancipated point of view. If we take modern novels as a picture of English life, we find that girls demand the same freedom. If French literature is at all an index to French life and customs, we cannot fail to see the difference between the novels read by a *jeune personne* and those which lie on our own tables; as well as the contrast in their lives and education. *Mon Oncle et mon Curé* and *Le Secret du Précepteur* are as delightful and as harmless as Miss Austen's works, which give us a picture of the life and conversation of her times. The contrast between the conversations of Catherine Morland and Mr. Tilney on their first meeting at Bath is antipodean to that of Jack and Dodo in the first volume of Mr. Benson's entertaining work. The latter is lighter, more amusing, more entertaining; but for all that the duller and less picturesque talk of Miss Morland is better than slipshod English interlarded with slang and *doubles entendres*.

The temptation to be epigrammatic, to say sharp things, is too great for us, and, as in other matters, in conversation the substance nowadays is often sacrificed to the shadow. Superficiality, which is the besetting sin of the nineteenth century, is attacking us all. When there is neither time nor inclination for perfection we must needs be content with whatever imitations we can find, and what is true of the decadence of many English customs is applicable to modern conversation.

## THE REVOLT OF THE DAUGHTERS.

Mrs. Crackanthorpe's thoughts on the disaffection of the daughters of England, published in *The Nineteenth Century*, seem to threaten us with a social revolution. There had been no warning of the impending strike. To us unsophisticated mothers, living happily in ignorance of the discontent burning in the bosoms of our daughters, the announcement of an organized series of "mothers' meetings" to protest against the movement comes as a cruel surprise. Apparently, the strike is developing rapidly; and we have no organisation to resist its onslaught. In an hysterical age, what chance of success, what sympathy, can we expect in our opposition to the Movement, supported by those who are strong, beautiful, and interesting? An army of youth and sentiment, with no sense of proportion, and no knowledge of life, rises to redress the grievances of girls against their mothers; the tocsin sounds; and we are told to beware, for the days of the "Know-nothings" are numbered at the hands of the "Know-alls." Thus a fresh problem is added to the question of the emancipation of women. If Mrs. Crackanthorpe

and her followers are widely representative, it is serious. Perhaps, however, it derives its alarm from its novelty.

The higher education of women in England was opposed, not from any reluctance to have the position of women improved, but from an instinctive conviction that when once they could affirm intellectual equality with men they would claim equal rights in all respects. The opposition has been justified. With women's intellectual development we have seen their entry into the arena of men's work, and, in many cases, a successful competition. The recognition by law that a woman's earnings were her own, and to be protected from her husband, was a definitive act in her emancipation. Certain privileges are still withheld from her; but every year brings her nearer to being given them. Were we prepared to go into the question of how women have borne the responsibilities they have won, it would not be difficult to show that they have felt their power, and have conducted themselves with patient dignity. Our aim, however, lies in another direction. We wish to consider the influence which better education, more freedom, and an earlier knowledge of life, are likely to exercise over women. We shall endeavour to show that it will not be so subversive as some expect.

Let us admit that there are certain households where mothers and daughters do not "hit it off," and that there are girls who are hysterical, and find their home-life uncongenial. That is not a phenomenon of later

days alone. Speaking from many years' experience, we are prepared to affirm that the damsels disaffected now are not more numerous, relatively, than those who were potential rebels forty years ago. Among the middle classes, indeed, they are fewer. Education has enabled thousands to go afield, and expend their superfluous energies, or their unsatisfied yearnings, in good, honest, solid work, which, while acting as a safety valve, has enabled them to earn their living. The nervous young woman is not the result of any system. She is a solecism in life, such as appears from time to time in uncivilized nature, as well as in the human family.

We hardly feel sure that we know the girls of whom Mrs. Crackanthorpe writes. We will take it that she means the girls, composing a large portion of English society, who are over twenty years of age. Why twenty should be the age at which a revolt from maternal control supervenes we cannot understand. Some girls are as discreet at sixteen as at twenty-six; but no girl can have adequate knowledge of life and of the world until she has had the experience which age alone can bestow. Modern education develops them intellectually; but the knowledge it gives is of little practical use to them as regards their conduct. Were they allowed to shape their lives on theories evolved from what they learn from books, they would be better without any education whatever.

It would be idle to deny that the girl of to-day is different from the girl of forty years ago. The scheme

of her education and her *entourage* are changed. She lives in an atmosphere which is liberal in thought as well as in conversation, and no girl now is as ignorant of life as her mother was at the same age. Still, the fact that the sphere of her life and knowledge is broader does not naturally make her impatient of restraint. There are not many girls who sigh for the forbidden fruits of amusement, or consider themselves ill-used because music halls, plays which deal with equivocal subjects, and books which treat of the relation of the sexes, are withheld from them. It is difficult to picture a happier life, a life of greater freedom, a life ampler in interests and pursuits, than girls now enjoy. If a girl is intellectually inclined, a university career is open to her. If she is athletic, she can take her part in all the sports and pastimes formerly the monopoly of her brothers. If she is sentimental and humanitarian, she can work among the poor and achieve high fame in philanthropy. Is she frivolous? There never was an age when society was so delightful and stiffened by so few restrictions. Some girls, more emancipated than others, sigh for latchkeys and the disestablishment of the chaperone—in short, for the freedom which marriage alone should give a woman. To the maternal mind the restrictions are necessary. The freedom which girls are permitted now, even in the strictest households, is as much as is good for them during the early years of life. Were the restraints relaxed, the ultimate results would be disastrous. There must always be questions in connection with which the

mother's experience and love will clash with her daughter's inclinations ; but they are of such importance as to put them beyond discussion, and they usually present no grievance.

Mrs. Crackanthorpe draws attention to a new aspect of the relations between mother and daughter. Before we had read her paper, one felt inclined to be grateful to one's girls that, considering the independence and enfranchisement of their lives, they were as lenient to our shortcomings and old-fashioned notions as they are. If there are homes under a system of repression, where individuality is stamped out, a struggle for supremacy must ensue. Even in such cases, we believe, the fault is with the juniors. We do not, however, hold a brief for the mothers only. We are ready to admit that where the shoe pinches it may be often at the mother's instance. Mothers too often grow older than need be, and forget that they have lives around them full of the keen impulses of youth, and fail to be friends to their girls. It is difficult to have perfect friendship without equality, and in that lies the explanation of the difficulties which often arise. The mother must be the ruler ; and it needs almost superhuman tact, temper, and discretion, to hold the reins and yet not appear to drive. There is no relation, no position, so theoretically perfect as that of a mother ; yet there is none so full of difficulties. The mother gives to her children all the devotion, all the love, almost all the passion, of her life. Her sole object is their welfare ; their affection, her reward. A good mother is the most



unselfish of human beings, and during childhood and youth all that is most precious in her to bestow she lavishes upon them. For no inconsiderable period she is everything to her children; the embodiment of wisdom, beauty, love; beyond her there is nothing perfect or divine. While it lasts, there is nothing out of heaven so beautiful; but into her Eden the serpent comes, and brings with him knowledge and dreams and ideals. There are, the children feel, worlds outside the world of mother's love and pleasures that compare not unfavourably with those of home. Their affection is not weaker or less real; but the positions are modified, and side by side with the trust and absorbing love of a child other interests and other desires grow up. It is then that the turning-point in both their lives is reached. If the mother, out of her love, can develop the wisdom which shows her that she is no longer to be the divinity of her children's dreams, but the guardian angel of their opening lives, all may be well; but that needs devotion and patience. It is hard to realise the change, and to accept the fact that the young individualities growing up around her are as distinct and irrepressible as herself. This, however, is what every woman who loves her children must endure. She must stand by and see them learn from their own experience. Hers is old-fashioned and out of date. The time for enforcing obedience is past. The wise mother sits by watching the enterprises and the experiments which are being carried out gaily under the eyes of herself—the person

who is popularly supposed to wield the rod which destroys and paralyzes her daughter's confidences.

Although such may be the theory about the position of the mother and the militant daughter of the nineteenth century, no civil war is being waged in English households. The positions are new ; but no change has come over the affection between the two. Now, more than at any other epoch, the mother is the friend of the girl. There are exceptions ; but, we maintain, there is a greater *camaraderie* between them, the result of their modified relations, than was ever possible before. While mothers retain their youth and enjoyment of life much longer, girls grow older more quickly. The levelling-up process diminishes the distance between them. The old system of severity and repression is past, and, whatever other feelings may have survived, fear has disappeared. There is the frankest discussion on any questions which involve the parental control. Equality is nowhere more flourishing than in a happy household. If that were not so, we should not have to deal with the question as one of modern life. We should have been compelled to reorganise our family system long ago. Mothers are accused of being stupid, wanting in magnanimity, narrow and unsympathetic ; and, like the Master Builder, are supposed to dread the pressure of the younger generation, who in their ruthless egoism are trying to sweep away the traditions of their sex and give full play to "inconvenient individuality." There are mothers and other mothers ; but we prefer to leave the other mothers to "dree their weird,"

and ask our readers to consider carefully whether we are not right in our contention that the relation of mother and daughter is incomparably happier now, and more on an equal footing, than at any other time, and that the vast majority have long ago learnt that to enforce obedience by right of motherhood is, in these times, a mistake.

In Mrs. Crackanthorpe's indictment against mothers, the real grievance lies in the charge that in opposing the daughters' desire for freedom they diminish the chance of good marriages. The "marriage-ring" is the authority which mothers acknowledge and obey; but they will not admit it for a moment. We are not going to deny that accusation; nor do we see any reason to be ashamed of the admission. We will go further; and declare that, if the opinion of men is to be of much importance in framing the characters and making the lives of girls in England what they have been, we are glad of it, and pray for the continuance of such an influence. To deny that marriage is the object of woman's existence is absurd. Long ago it was the only aim a woman had; and her training, education, and life, were framed on that supposition. The fact that there were many women who could not marry, and led very miserable lives, does not disprove it; but that woman was created for the purpose of being wife and mother no one can deny. That none of the discoveries of science, or any attempt to solve the mysteries of life, has brought her one bit nearer the knowledge of how to unburden herself of

these responsibilities is a stable fact. Such being the case, why should anybody affirm that it is not so? It cannot be a cause of shame; nor is it a disgrace: it is a fact as immutable as any in nature. It springs from an instinct inherent in women. It shows itself in the love of the little child for her doll; and in the unbidden blush which rises to the cheek of every girl when the mysteries of life are beginning to be unfolded to her, and her heart tells her that there is a deeper and more passionate love than that of home. Since the creation of all things, woman has joyfully fulfilled her mission; and she will so continue; those only protesting to whom the opportunity has not come, or to whom independence constitutes the worth of life. Far from joining in Mrs. Crackanthorpe's cry against the influence which "the marriage market" has on the action of mothers, we think it is, within limits, good. Every woman wishes for the happiness of her daughters, and knows that in a union where there is sympathy in tastes and character the happiness of life is to be found; and in training her daughter for that career she is doing her obvious duty. No one blames a mother for educating her daughters well, for selecting desirable companions, for dressing them prettily, and for endeavouring to find them pleasant society and amusements. Why, when the most important event of their life is impending, should it be a crime for her to apply the same willing consideration? Any happily-married mother must earnestly desire the same good fortune for her girl, and she is perfectly justified in endeavouring to put such happiness

in her way. We are very fond of declaring that we seek only the happiness of our daughters, but that on that one subject we are indifferent, provided—and so on. Let us be honest. Let us say that we care more about that subject than almost any other: that we want our girls to marry, and marry well, and marry the best men, because we know that they will be happier and better for having done so.

Howsoever indifferent a mother may appear to be, it is impossible for her not to feel the keenest desire that her girl should make a good marriage; and everything that she can do to insure it we may be certain she will do, and be justified. The mother of whom Mrs. Crackanthorpe speaks is, unhappily, not a fiction. There have been, there are, and always will be, women and girls who are ready to sell themselves as long as rank, wealth, and position, are the sole objects to which a woman aspires in marrying. That is not the result of modern training. Such a marriage-market has always been. Of the mother, with her knowledge of life, we will not speak, for there is nothing to be said in extenuation; but of the girl one must always remember that she is ignorant, and often weak, and has the example before her of many women who have done the same, and have, with an unpromising future to face, not only made themselves happy, but changed their husbands into better men. A girl will always justify her action by the hope that, in a happy, peaceful life, and under the influence of a good woman, a man will *ranger* himself and become a good husband and

father. The risk is great, and the result is always problematical ; but there are sufficient examples of such triumph to make her feel that the experiment need not be a failure. Men do not, as society is at present constituted, always bring a blameless past to the altar ; but they may make expiation by fidelity and devotion in marriage. Unless a man is lost to the sense of honour, he does not disappoint the woman in her expectations. There are some men so completely outside the pale of morality as to be worthless in every way ; but of the majority may we not reasonably feel our position to be a fair one ?

In face of the greater emancipation desired by girls, which would, if permitted, lead to scandals, it seems a little superfluous that they should expect so high a standard of morality in men. If the concession of the *Wanderjahr* is made to them, we shall see the positions reversed, and find men exacting from women a standard of purity which is now taken as a matter of course.

It is difficult to name the age at which the restraints on girls should be relaxed. There is obviously a period when, if a woman does not marry, she may be allowed freedom both as regards the way in which she will use her life and as regards the maternal control. We should say that that is not before she is twenty-five. We know that the acquisition of a privilege, when it comes in the order of things, is not so precious as when it is wrested in conflict. The enfranchisement which a woman attains by age is not of the same value in her

eyes. It has, in reality, a value greater than it would have had in earlier days. She has learnt something of life, and experienced its difficulties. She is better able to appreciate the proportionate value of what she acquires, and will not run a-mock, violating every rule of conduct and decorum ; which in all probability she would do if she were eighteen or twenty. We do not say this from a disbelief in the inherent purity of girls ; but with the ignorance of youth, the strength of its impulses, the unscrupulousness of men, and the temptations of life, how could we trust any girl to herself ?

There is an aspect of the question which is graver and still more delicate. We do not imagine that the proposed enfranchisement of girls is to be limited to the life they wish to lead or to the persons with whom they associate. If a girl is to be left to her discretion in such things, it can be only after a fuller knowledge of life and its problems has been unfolded to her. She should not be launched on her eventual career without full instructions in the mysteries of the Book of Life. To be safe, she must know how to protect herself ; and that knowledge can only be acquired after full initiation in subjects from which thitherto she had been carefully guarded. Superficially, the proposed change in the life of girls appears comparatively small ; but, if one analyses its effect, it means a complete upheaval of tradition. The new school with regard to the position of women holds that absolute knowledge of life can not only do no harm, but is necessary and just, and



should not be withheld from the girl of to-day, and that instruction in life's mysteries is as important a part of her curriculum as instruction in any other subject. If knowledge meant protection from temptation, it might be argued that girls thrown early on their own resources, and obliged to face the world, would be better able to carry out their career safely if warned of certain obvious dangers. Such cases are the exception. With the majority of girls the home is still a haven, and the mother a counsellor and friend. We have to deal with the community at large. We are told that there is no innocence in ignorance; and that girls would be wiser, more discreet, and less likely to fall into temptation, if they knew more. If the programme of the reformers were carried out, the destruction of the present system as to the bringing-up of girls would make some changes necessary. If we are to give girls the freedom of married women without the protection of the husband, we must find his substitute. That substitute must come from a fuller knowledge of life.

Will anyone calmly say that such a change is possible, or desirable in any of its aspects? Do we wish to see our girls half men in theory and half women in inexperience and ignorance, with a superficial smattering of knowledge grafted on to the restless impulses and the vague curiosity of youth; with all the romance, all the illusions of life, dispelled; and with neither the constitution nor the capacity of men to carry out their careers; above all, bereft of the sweet talisman of purity

which hitherto has imparted their greatest charm? What advantage is it to a woman to know the dark depths of life? We may rest assured that women, like their mother Eve, will not be content with a little knowledge, but will probe deeply, and eat the forbidden fruit. Why is the rosy morn of life, with its joys, its interests, its indescribable longings, to be but a dream of the past? Why must the girl, from the threshold of her sweet ignorance, step into womanhood surrounded by the cloud of a knowledge which makes her sad and old while still there are years in which she should be young? We believe that the majority of women would, if asked, declare that such knowledge would only bring sorrow and horror.

Were we to appeal to men, whose influence has, we are told, created this false position, their reply, we have little doubt, would be that what women must learn of life and its worst possibilities had best be taught them by their husbands. We fear we shall be considered poor champions of our sex in avowing assent; but we prefer that our daughters should be as little versed in knowledge of life as their mothers were. We shall lose something of the robust intellectual self-reliance of emancipated girls; but we shall always have with us the daughters of our hearts, ignorant, wilful, perhaps not always prudent, but with the better armour that innocence, romance, and a belief in the illusions of life, must always constitute. The problem is so difficult, so complex, so full of pitfalls, that, if we really come to analyse all the suggestions which are made, we shall

find that no one has ventured to attack the system seriously. It is pleasant to break a lance with custom, and many lances have been shivered by the reformer's onslaught ; but the position of our girls, their education, and their training, are more momentous than any social tradition yet assailed. The whole fabric of the love between mother and daughter is not to be shattered because the restrictions against hearing Mr. Chevalier sing at Music Halls, seeing *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, and reading *Dodo* and *The Heavenly Twins*, are being enforced. That love will continue as long as women do not forfeit the friendship and confidence which it is a girl's instinct to give to her mother ; and the wise mother, having her affection, will have no difficulty in steering clear of the rocks and shoals which underlie the smoothest currents of life.

## THE WOMAN OF TO-DAY.

Recently we have been favoured with a description of the latest and most brilliant development of this most original age, The Woman of To-day. The feeling left on one's mind after perusal of the article is that of humiliation at one's ignorance. The discourse is mortifying to anyone who imagines herself in touch with what is called society. One racks one's brain in vain for some resemblance in the woman whom Lady Catherine Gaskell describes among one's friends and acquaintances. Only in a few indistinct peculiarities do we detect any likeness among them to the being, endowed with the superhuman qualities, mental and physical, whom Lady Catherine so graphically sketches. One's chagrin, however, is succeeded by a great relief. Haunted by the nightmare which the perusal of the article gives, one sets oneself with greater diligence to analyse it a second time, and the joyful conviction grows with soothing certainty that such women as Lady Catherine writes of are the few abnormal products of modern society. They can be counted almost on one's fingers, and are as unlike

the typical Englishwoman of these days as a Red Indian squaw is unlike a French cocotte.

At first sight, Lady Catherine's statements and deductions appear plausible. When she says that the conditions of life for women are changed, and that a higher standard in everything is expected of them now-a-days, she is not inaccurate. No one now-a-days is content with what would have been considered perfection thirty years ago. Education has changed the condition of women materially, and the increased freedom which women enjoy has put them on a footing nearer to equality with men. The greater liberty is very much the result of the increasing occupation of men. Fifty years ago life was much more simple. People dwelt in the country, where it was uneventful and monotonous ; very few people were rich enough to come to London ; and there was no moneyed class like that which now-a-days adds to the wants and luxuries of life. The opening of railways and the increased facilities of locomotion have now made London the great centre of society ; and life has become more luxurious, more expensive, and, undoubtedly, somewhat demoralising. Long ago a young married woman was content with her garden, her pony, and her children, and the hum-drum society her country neighbours afforded her, and was content to make her husband's small income suffice for the wants of the household ; but now-a-days two young people launched on a small income are not satisfied until they have a

large one. Smart dresses, carriages, dinner-parties, and all sorts of social indulgences, are becoming necessities of life ; and, in order to attain the positions which will enable them to gratify the desires of their spouses, men go into any business or embrace any profession by which they can become rich rapidly.

To carry out any career with success, it is absolutely necessary that a man's whole attention should be given up to it. His time, therefore, must be spent at his work and away from home, while the woman has the day on her hands. The details of the *ménage* do not take up all her time. She has to find some safety-valve for her superfluous energy ; and her natural outlet, the care of her children, is not sufficient. To those women who are not intellectually inclined, or physically strong, domestic difficulties and the choosing of their clothes engross attention ; but the more daring spirits are not to be deluded by such will-o'-the-wisps. Chance association, or inclination gives them a start, and they launch on the ocean of independent occupation.

In generalizing on the changes that have come over the position of women in England during the last thirty years, it is natural to say that they are sweeping ; that the bent of women's ideas, the aims of their lives, have so completely changed that the career of a woman now has no resemblance whatever to that of her grandmother ; but in reality, with one exception, their lives are similar. The

influences that affect them are the same, and the mission they have to discharge has not changed. It is only in one direction that the lives and interests of women are different; and, although with different natures results vary, the effect of that change should not be such as to unfit women for any of their duties. The only important change is in their education. Women are not really expected to know more than, or even as much as, formerly; but what they profess to know they must know accurately. The small drawing-room accomplishments of thirty years ago, which passed muster as the test of an accomplished woman, are obsolete; the superficial knowledge which a smattering of French and German, a little music, singing, and drawing, gave is no longer considered sufficient; and, although a woman need know one subject only, it is absolutely necessary, if she aspires to any intellectual or artistic position, that she should be thoroughly versed in it. A much wider knowledge of English literature and history is now part of the necessary curriculum of any woman of position; and, as many have to earn their living by teaching, the standard has risen, and accuracy is expected. "Shakspeare, the musical glasses, and the use of the globes," are no longer the test subjects in woman's work; nor do they represent the scope of her knowledge, which may be less superficially comprehensive than formerly; but the lack of variety is more than compensated for by accuracy. It is not necessary for a woman to train herself to maintain a conversation on every conceivable subject; nor



is it expected that she should know the points of a horse, the pedigree of a cow, the latest development of Theosophy, the last theory in Sociology ; nor need she possess the physique of an athlete ; but she is expected to hold her own, on general subjects of interest, against those she may come in contact with.

All this implies wider knowledge and broader ideas than were possessed by the women of thirty years ago ; but, whilst it has increased the interests and deepened the character of women, it has not created that restless desire to know and to do everything which is, we are now told, the characteristic of the modern woman.

The effect of better education has been to steady women, to develop the more serious part of their natures. It acts as a stimulus to continued improvement, intensifying their desire to learn more of the subjects in which they are interested, feeling most keenly, as they increase their store of intellectual treasures, that they are but on the threshold of a life the possibilities of which fill them with wonder and delight ; and in turning over the leaves of the book of knowledge they find enjoyment and occupation which fill their hitherto empty lives.

Such a life, full of intense interest and pleasure, involves a strain on the physical endurance of women and girls ; but the strain need not always produce that nervous exhaustion which is the result of great excitement combined with physical and mental pressure. It may, however, attack women who are training to make educational work their profession, as it usually comes

often at a critical time in a woman's life, when all her strength and vitality are required to enable her to grow and develop, and when her keenness for work and her anxiety to take a good place in her examination are predominant.

It is in this respect that the increased strain on women's intellectual and physical force comes, not in the effort to compete with men. In the life of women who adopt the higher and sterner professions any attempt to adopt the habits of *The Woman of To-day* would be not only impossible but repugnant. Howsoever trying, and perhaps injurious, the effect of more exacting education on the constitutions of women may be, one cannot but recognise the opportunities it affords those who desire to avail themselves of an escape from an empty, aimless life. The education of women, the higher intellectual standard required of them, has created a class in England which no other country possesses, or has ever possessed, women who are able not only to hold their own with men in every branch of learning, but to eclipse them in some; and it has impressed them with the realities and the dignity of their position, nothing being more striking than the singular modesty and retirement of the most remarkable of modern Englishwomen.

No woman has ever made any attempt to bring her views before the public without its having cost her the greatest effort to overcome the natural dislike which every delicately-minded woman has to becoming the public exponent of her opinions, and it is significant

that those who have taken the most prominent positions in medicine and in other sciences are as remarkable for silence and self-effacement as for the gifts which have placed them in the positions which they occupy. A woman profoundly acquainted with any of the deeper questions of life is too much engrossed by her determination to learn more to attempt to master, even superficially, any other subject. The parrot-like volubility of women who take up every subject is recognised as a sure sign of ignorance. Is it possible that anyone could have a profound knowledge of the hundred subjects upon which some women suppose it necessary to be informed? A man devotes all his life to one subject, and at the end of years of research only knows enough to realise how great his ignorance is; yet some women think that because they have mastered the jargon of a few affairs of more or less abstract interest they are qualified to preach opinions which are of value.

The fact is that the curse of to-day, the drawback under which every woman with any intellectual aspirations labours, is the difficulty of knowing any one subject more than superficially. Lady Catherine Gaskell is right, in a certain sense, in saying that women now-a-days must know about every subject; but it is only women of a certain class who consider it necessary, and that class is principally of women in good society. The conventional restraints which affected aristocratic society long after they had been cast aside by other classes did tend to narrow the

interests and lives of women belonging to it; but many women accepted with avidity the relaxation and freedom it brought them, and took up in a more or less superficial way a great many different subjects of intellectual interest, as well as many occupations thitherto denied them. Like bees flying from flower to flower, they sipped what pleased, amused, and interested, imbibing just as much knowledge as would pass for current Thought. With the middle-class woman another aspect of life was opened. The relaxation of restraints not only gave her independence, and a possibility of earning her livelihood; but it impressed her with a sense of the importance and solemnity of her position. Thus it has continued, bringing to the one class of women a large and varied round of amusements, and to the other a deepened sense of the value of the career that is open to them; and, as a result, we find all the intellectual and professional women belonging to the middle classes, while the political and social developments of women are confined almost exclusively to the upper class.

Lady Catherine dwells on the attention which women must pay now-a-days to the arrangement of their households, and to the important question of the kitchen. No woman in modern society knows how to set about the A B C of her grandmother's work. She could not dust a room, or tell her cook how to make the most elementary dishes. Among the upper classes, or where people are rich, everything in the household devolves upon the servants. There is a good cook and a good

butler, and the mistress never need give anything a thought. Everything is done in regular routine. A hostess, either in London or in the country, can sit down to her dinner-table, with her eighteen or twenty guests, in the absolute certainty that there will not be a hitch, although she has probably not seen her cook since she ordered dinner; and so it is with the minor requirements of modern life. The cheap artistic decorations in stuffs, china, furniture, and carpets, which can be procured everywhere, have reduced the greatest difficulty a housewife had to contend with—namely, how to make her house look pretty at small expense. A little skill and taste, which entail no fatigue or effort, suffice to make the interior of the smallest house effective, and give it a character of its own. Contrast the position of a woman thirty years ago with regard to those two matters alone, and it is easy to see how infinitely less trouble we have to-day. The difficulties with regard to expense and material have entirely disappeared, and a woman's natural taste enables her to gratify almost any ambition she may have in those matters. It would be easy to multiply the ways in which women are not required to make anything like the effort it cost their mothers and grandmothers to carry out the few amusements of their lives. How well we all remember what an event a dinner-party was in the days of our childhood! How the whole household was pressed into the service; how the family plate was taken out days before and cleaned, the chintz covers removed in the state rooms, clean

curtains put up ; and, when the eventful day arrived, how the mistress of the house was occupied from early morning superintending the details ! How well one remembers the jam-making and other annual culinary operations, all of which were overlooked by the mistress, who was not only expected to know and criticise, but to carry out her directions personally ; and then the shooting parties, which were a source of endless satisfaction to the male guests, but a great anxiety to their hostess ! All the small details relating to the bedrooms, such as seeing the fires lighted, the beds aired, and all the necessary accessories of a party, fell on the hostess, and only when her guests departed did she throw off the sense of anxiety which hospitality entailed. Now-a-days, no mistress need think of such small things. Her well-trained housekeeper attends to all those matters ; and, unless she likes to see for herself, it is unnecessary for her to trouble her head on the subject.

These are small matters ; but, when they are cited as instances of the variety of cares which women now-a-days have to contend with, it is as well to show that they are not to be compared with the responsibilities and work which women had to undertake thirty years ago. So it is in all such matters. It may be that more neatness, more comfort, more artistic circumstance, are required of women in their homes than were expected formerly ; but the facilities for providing them are endless, and the cost is much less. Thus the work cannot be greater, and it seems hardly

worth while to quote such matters as examples of the great accumulation of responsibilities which are crowded on the shoulders of the women of to-day with regard to domestic concerns. The same facilities apply to dress, an important and engrossing subject. Materials are less expensive and prettier, and the variety is endless; flowers, ribbons, laces, all the *chiffons* of women's clothes, are abundant and cheap; and we know, when we see the smartly-dressed daughters of the country doctor, or of the clergyman, how much more cheaply, easily, and tastefully, they are able to dress than their mothers were. All those facts tend to prove that the pitch of excellence expected from a woman is not more difficult to attain, but infinitely easier, than it was for her mother. In all classes it is the same: only that it entails less effort on the part of a woman in society, such as Lady Catherine describes, than in the case of people who are poorer. The whole day's programme is one which is as easy to carry out and enjoy as anything one can imagine. It is entirely dependent on the proficiency of servants; and the possession of such assistance is only a question of money.

It is, however, quite possible for women, with all the fatigue-saving apparatus which ample means give, to be quite as busy and overworked as Lady Fanny Clermont, whose day's occupation Lady Catherine describes. That wonderful product of to-day, with her superhuman capabilities and iron constitution, may be as fussy as other women, and may possibly, like



her inferior sisters, be of a jealous temperament, not liking anyone to help her in her duties, because she is morbidly afraid of losing her power. Women are jealous about their husbands, children, lovers ; but there is nothing a woman cares for so much, and is so jealous of, as power, and the more capable and energetic she is the more tenaciously she keeps the reins in her own hands. Jealousy often explains why the most capable women never attain to perfection in their work. Although it is absolutely impossible for them to undertake everything themselves, they are too jealous to entrust it to any subordinate. This weakness is being intensified by the endless work undertaken by many women who have neither time nor capacity to carry it out. There is with them a tendency to exaggerate the amount of work they get through, and the labour it entails ; because, although they may be capable of originating, they are often very unmethodical in practice, and add to the burden by their want of system. It is small weaknesses like these, which are essentially feminine, that impress women with the importance of the efforts they make and the herculean strength which they require to accomplish them. Women have little sense of proportion, and are apt to throw themselves with unbridled energy into any purpose they care about ; and, as a woman's life is made up of infinitely small cares, they become multiplied indefinitely, and very little more is needed to produce a woman like the one we have just been introduced to.

It is only in England that such lives are possible for women, or that there is any desire on their part to adopt them. In France women have neither constitution nor capacity for a life of such infinite variety. In Germany women are housewives, and nothing more. Any chance of the education and development they may have hoped for, had the Empress Frederick reigned long enough, has disappeared ; and the opinions of the present Emperor on the position of women are not likely to cause an improvement. In Italy and in Russia intellectual life and improvement among women is confined almost entirely to the middle classes, the aristocracy holding to the old conservative feelings on the subject. In America, where equality and freedom are their natural inheritance, the restless life full of varied occupations, and the love and craving for excitement, do not exist. Their intellectual and political life is not trammelled in any way ; but in America, as in all other countries, the monopoly of intelligence and capacity is not possessed by the aristocratic class, which is quite content to devote itself to amusement, the more serious business being relegated to the women who have to work for their living, who apparently realise, as women of the same class in England do, the importance and value of the change that education has caused. Among the middle classes in England there is very little change outwardly. The same quiet, easygoing life, the same sense of duty, the same deep family affection, are their distinctive qualities ; and, whatever the effects

of the change that has come over women of the upper classes may be, there is no reason to suppose that it has yet affected the classes below in any great degree, or that the backbone of English society, the respectable and well-to-do middle classes, view the lives and careers of their womenkind from a point of view other than that which regulated them thirty years ago.

That the woman described as The Woman of To-day is a reality no one, unfortunately, can deny ; but she exists entirely for her own edification. No one wants her to take up such a *rôle*, and when she has launched on her career she is an object of anything but admiration or envy. It gives no man any sense of pleasure to see a woman stumping the country, or wading through turnips, with or without her gun ; and if she does not win his admiration and approbation she has lamentably failed. The truth is that such women lead this life simply because it amuses them. No one wants them to become inferior men ; but the life of excitement interests them. The notoriety, coupled with the easily-won applause of a crowd, who would cheer a juggler swallowing knives and plates, they misinterpret for admiration ; and, having begun with the notion that a woman's mission is to be as busy as possible with every subject that attracts her attention, they start on their self-imposed mission with all the zeal of proselytes and the impulsiveness of their sex. One cannot but admit that a woman possessed of the energy and enthusiasm necessary to lead such a life must be

possessed of more than average capacity. The natural outlet for all superabundant energy in a woman ought to be her home and her home interests, and those are so far-reaching and so comprehensive that they should afford her ample occupation ; but, as they are humdrum and monotonous, she goes farther afield. Charitable enterprise offers a wide scope of activity to women ; but the routine soon palls, and some more exciting interest becomes a necessity ; and where can a woman show herself off to better advantage than in the political arena ? The glib power of expressing herself, which is a distinctly feminine gift, is pre-eminently useful ; her knowledge is quite sufficient, superficial though it is, to enable her to string together sentences more or less wordy and confusing. "Politics" is a very elastic word, embracing many social subjects on which she can speak with a certain authority ; and, when she has exhausted all such matters, what more glorious duty can devolve on her than that of appealing, in impassioned perorations to Heaven and to the Masses, in behalf of the Union of Hearts ?

Twenty years ago the monopoly of feminine oratory was possessed by the Liberals ; and the "shrieking sisterhood," though the apostles of an unsavoury cause, were at any rate sincere in their determination to press the disagreeable subject of their crusade on the world ; and they were tolerated (though spoken of in whispers), it always being admitted, as extenuation of their misdemeanours, that they were Radicals. All that is changed. The women of England have entered the lists, and in

the new departure have thrown aside all the distinctive qualities which were once the pride and glory of Englishwomen. Fortunately, our girls have so far escaped. The sudden emancipation and development of the New Women has not touched them; but the golden circlet and the orange blossoms break the charm, and the modest maiden soon blooms into a "female propagandist." One does not, happily, see why Englishwomen, until they marry, should be different from their mothers and grandmothers. The modern political mother has neither time nor inclination to have her girls much with her. Even if she were as remarkable a woman as Lady Fanny Clermont, and could write abstruse articles on complex subjects with her children romping and tearing round the room, the time allotted to such relaxation must be limited, and her daughters must remain in the obscurity of the school-room till they "come out" and have an insight into the life and training which have made their mother one of the most distinguished public characters of the day. There is no limit to the occupations and subjects such women take up. They are insatiable, and incapable of fatigue; and the more serious subjects in life are varied by experiments in other modes of existence. They may be frivolous, or religious, or Bohemian, as well as political; and if their constitutions are good they may be everything, and are prepared to flood the world with their knowledge. If we think for a moment of the life of the so-called typical Woman of To-day, it is difficult to imagine

anything more demoralising mentally, or more deteriorating physically. The long day which ends only when the dawn is breaking must bring endless hours of weariness and fatigue. Such a life is one which must necessarily sap and wear out the constitution of any woman, howsoever strong. No one can live at such high pressure, for the perpetual burning of the candle at both ends can only have one result. Work or fatigue can be borne ; but the strain of physical fatigue and mental exhaustion combined must break the strongest. The hard-worked man saves himself only because when the pressure is on him he relinquishes all other occupations, and in what leisure he allows himself he takes repose.

Consider, again, women who are obliged to work for their living, either by literary work or by music. Rest is as much a necessity for them as food, and what time they can spare for amusement or relaxation is usually devoted to distractions of the mildest kind. No person who has to earn a living could by any possibility lead such a life as the one Lady Catherine describes. The fatigue she must undergo would exhaust her so much that her work would deteriorate under the double effort. Human endurance will only support a certain strain, and the limit must be over-stepped in the life depicted by Lady Catherine. We may, therefore, take it for granted that she does not consider her woman a representative of English women generally, but only typical of a class. Unfortunately, as I have said, the most pro-



minent and well-known of those women belong to the upper classes, who give a tone to others ; and, as all classes are influenced by those above them, the influence of The Woman of To-day is, unfortunately, strong and increasing. It has not yet much affected the classes below ; but, as it is becoming the fashion for women of the upper classes to lead lives of excitement and unrest, it cannot fail to spread, and the injury it will inflict on the nation is certain to be serious. Imitation is the sincerest flattery, and in no way is the admiration of the lower for the upper classes more distinctly shown than it is in their dress and amusements. The women servants are but an edition, on a less refined but more brilliant scale, of the manners and gowns of their mistresses ; and in their way they like to partake of their mistresses' amusements and occupations, and only want of leisure prevents them from being more faithful counterfeits. It is not, however, only for those reasons that the lives of a great many women are bad for themselves as well as for others. The life of excitement they lead is worse than any dram-drinking ; and its effects are more abidingly injurious, not to themselves alone but to their children. We are already beginning to see in a small way the result it will have, in future generations, in the numbers of delicate and weakly children that are under continual medical supervision from their infancy. Nervous, rickety, and bloodless, they are the natural offspring of the overstrung, sensitive mothers. If we contrast the bringing-up of children thirty or forty years ago with the care



that is of necessity taken of children now, we see that they have not inherited the constitutions of their grandparents. Anæmia, indigestion, want of blood, and rickets, the most common and troublesome of all childrens' complaints, are indications that the young generation have not the same vitality as their predecessors. Nervous exhaustion and heart-weakness are the two fashionable maladies, for the old-fashioned complaints common to women seem to have disappeared. Private homes and hospitals are growing up in London and elsewhere for what are called "paying patients," and they are tenanted by a class of women quite different from any that have undergone such treatment before. The scale of payment proclaims their position; and they are all nearly cases of hysteria or nervous exhaustion, the result of unnatural life. It is impossible to expect any other results; and, unless the conditions of life for women change, we must look forward to generations of men and women growing up physically weaker, and wanting in all the qualities which have made our men strong, and our women wives and mothers that have given sons to England whose hearts, hands, and brains, have made us great. It would, indeed, be a serious matter to contemplate anything like a permanent general deterioration in the physical or nervous strength of English women; but there is one fact which, happily, must eventually overcome all the fits and fashions of the day. In the very weakness which one cannot but deplore will be found the remedy.

No one has ever disputed the physical superiority of men over women ; and, although the question of mental superiority will continue to vex generations, upon whatever platform of intellectual equality they may eventually alight, women must always be weaker than men. Constitutional weakness prevents a woman from working many days in the year, and in that fact alone lies one important cause of the difference ; but the inexorable law which has laid on woman the greatest work of nature is her safeguard. Women will find, when the strain of their extraneous work begins to tell on them, as it has already done, that the one function imperatively required of them needs all the physical strength they can spare, and that in that, and not in attempting to be inferior men, must their lives be spent. The cares of maternity are not pleasing to The Woman of To-day. If the testimony of those who are able to judge about such matters is to be credited, there is a strong inclination among them not to increase them inconveniently, and families are much smaller than they were twenty years ago. A rather amusing instance of the opinions of a well-known personage who officiates on certain domestic occasions was given by someone who naively said that her monthly nurse had complained bitterly of the badness of her trade ; and it requires no great effort to understand how very much the fact of having children must make a life of amusement and excitement impossible for a woman. Child-bearing occupies the best years of a woman's life ; when she is strongest, most beautiful, and best able to amuse her-

self; and Nature wisely arranged it so, that she might give her best to the children she is to bring forth; and the object of The Woman of To-day is to frustrate that arrangement. She may do so to a certain extent; but in the tussle with the great mother of all she must come off worsted; and, although she beat her wings like an imprisoned bird against the bars of her cage, Nature smiles at her attempts to rid herself of what is a great inconvenience. It is only because of the impossibility of combining their lives of amusement and pleasure with the duties of maternity that women dislike having children; for, as everything else has been made easier to them in these days, so the use of anæsthetics has done away with the terrors of childbirth; and after the baby is laid in its mother's arms there is nothing left for her of sorrow and pain save the fear and joy which are so inextricably mixed up in the deepest feelings of maternity. What greater pride or pleasure is there for any woman than to be the mother of a great man, to know that her child has taken his place in the roll of distinguished Englishmen? and what nobler mission than training and guiding the little lives dependent on her?

Women much over-rate the pleasure and delights of the one career, and vastly under-rate the solid and permanent happiness of the career which Nature intended them to follow, the career from which, struggle as they may, they cannot escape. In the inexorable laws of Nature, there is ample security that things will right themselves. A few years must show English women

that they cannot burn the candle at both ends, and that the life of high pressure they are striving to follow must infallibly break them down. Women will gradually accept the stern fact that, first of all, they must be wives and mothers. Then they can be whatever their strength and leisure will allow. Women can have as much political and social influence as will satisfy the most insatiable ambition ; but they must be content to exercise it in their legitimate sphere, and not encroach on ground fitted only for stronger wills and rougher natures. At all times in England the influence of women has been felt and recognised, not openly, or as the result of competition, but because men have always acknowledged that in all the important events of their lives a woman has been the arbiter of their destiny. The history of the world ought to console the most restless and ambitious of her sex. She has but to remember that in all the great movements that have influenced mankind some woman has borne more than her share of the responsibility. Emancipate or make herself as masculine as she will, she can never have more power than she already possesses. Without wandering from the narrowest path of a woman's career, she has ample scope for as much good or as much evil as she wills. She is, and always must be, physically and intellectually inferior to the man ; but in many qualities she is infinitely his superior ; and his tacit acknowledgment of that superiority, in the chivalry, devotion, and respect of men, is all she should ask. The Woman of To-day

may be of stronger fibre and more commanding influence ; but her power must be won by her wits, and she will have to fight for its possession ; for she will never win the love, devotion, and tenderness, that less capable but more womanly women than she command.

In politics, in religion, in society, in all the questions of life which affect women deeply, The New Woman, with her political aspirations, her religious opinions, and her advanced social theories, will play a prominent though perhaps not lovely part ; but experience will show her that, in the long run, the less ambitious woman will have the best of her. The restless, unsatisfied longings of women for a sphere of unlimited activity will work their own cure ; and not only for physical reasons, but also for reasons of expediency, they will see the wisdom of returning to the ways of their mothers and grandmothers. The hot fit of excitement will pass, and reason will reassert its sway. The quiet joys of home, the love of husband and children, the constant thought of them and their welfare, to the effacement of herself, will return with all the delight of novelty ; and she will be at peace. She will have lost nothing, and gained immeasurably, by the change. She will still be politically powerful—perhaps more so than when she claimed her rights. Her life will be full of varied and intricate interests. Only, she will change the scene of her activity and influence : from outside to her own home. The care for and thought of husband and children,

thitherto relegated to wet days, will resume their place of pre-eminence, and she will willingly exchange the vulgar applause of a crowd for the smile and the tenderness that tell her of pleasures and powers which were lost in the excited whirl. The soft faces of her children, their fond kisses, and the little arms thrown lovingly round her neck, will be sweeter far than the theories of Universal Brotherhood and the Equality of Man and Woman which gave her such satisfaction in the past ; and one by one, as the crude opinions and convictions drop away, she will find that only since she renounced what then appeared to her a creed full of the purest and highest aspirations has she really learned to live, and that in striving to be all-powerful she was weak, and that in acknowledging her weakness she is strong.

## EXTRAVAGANCE IN DRESS.

There was a time, within the memory of many of us, when it was an accepted fact that English women did not know how to dress, and no one would have had the courage to deny that taste in dress or in adornment was to be found only among the French. French women have hitherto always enjoyed the reputation of being the best and most-expensively dressed women, and set the fashions for the rest of the world. The late Empress of the French, in the heyday of her beauty and power, paid much attention to the matter, and her luxury and expenditure gave the great impetus to French taste and fashion in the matter of clothes. The never-ending succession of *fêtes* at the Tuileries and St. Cloud,—which were continued even in the country life of the French Court,—taxed the inventive taste of the first French modistes, and gave birth to the kaleidoscopic change of fashions which alone satisfied that pleasure-loving society. The most costly silks and velvets were made to deck out the French aristocracy of the Second Empire for the gorgeous soirées and receptions of the brilliant and beautiful Eugénie, while at Fontainebleau fantastic and expensive *toilettes de*



*campagne* were invented and worn to add zest and colour to the life of enjoyment which was played at beneath the spreading trees and in the glades of that most enchanting scene. French taste was copied and adopted in England, and women of fashion or style bought their smartest garments in Paris, or procured them from English modistes intimately associated with the smartest French milliners ; but until quite recently, owing to the difficulty of communication, the costliness of the materials, and the high price asked by the foreign milliners, the majority contented themselves with the cheaper and less original English dresses. The increased facilities of communication, and the cheapening of all material for dress, added to the impetus given to fashion by the luxury and gaiety of the French Court, which, spreading in a lesser measure to England, produced a revival of taste founded on French ideas. Paris undoubtedly still takes the lead in new fashions ; but in England we make what modifications and changes we find suitable to our English ideas, and do not continue our slavish obedience to the French conceptions.

Woman's taste and influence on fashion have done a great deal towards improving our ideas in England. Cheap postal rates and cheap fashion-books have aided further. There is no country vicarage, no small middle-class family in the most remote part of England, that cannot procure a journal of fashions in which the gowns worn by the richest and most conspicuous women are depicted, together with those suitable to

a humbler and simpler life,—with the minutest description of how to carry out the designs,—as well as patterns that can be copied by the veriest neophyte; and nothing is more striking than the well-cut and smart gowns that one sees at any lawn-tennis or afternoon party, or county ball, worn by the daughters of men of narrowly limited income. There are now in every country town first-rate dressmakers who are prepared to turn out a gown that would do credit to any London milliner, and the shops provide a variety of material which makes dressing well, without much taste or knowledge, a very easy thing to those who have money to spend. Much money is not even a necessity. With the extraordinary cheapness of dress-material, the actual cost is easily within the limits of the most slender allowance. The same is true of the most important items, perhaps, of women's dress,—namely, gloves, boots, shoes, and stockings, all of which are about forty per cent. cheaper than they were thirty years ago;—and all articles of millinery, such as feathers, flowers, and ribbons, are equally moderate in price. I do not suppose that anyone will question the truth of the statement as to the increased cheapness of all articles of dress, or as to the improved facilities for dressing well that are now at hand; but, at the same time, no one can deny that people spend more, and that in every way the cost of dressing has increased as much as the cost of material has diminished. This, perhaps, is not true of all classes; but of the upper, the upper-middle, and the middle classes, it certainly

is. It may be interesting to examine the causes which have produced this, and also to show that even to the class which should have benefited by the increased cheapness of production (I mean the poorer or working class) it has not been an unmixed blessing.

If we look back forty years, and take as example any woman of the upper classes, and recall to our minds how she dressed and what variety she allowed herself in clothes, we shall see what a vast change has come. From £300 to £400 a year was considered very large pin-money for a woman who, from rank and fortune, was expected to dress better than her neighbours. Her wardrobe probably consisted of one or two good silks, costing about from £8 to £12 each, generally a velvet gown, and one or two common gowns for every-day wear. Her evening gowns cost about £10 or £12,—that for very smart ones,—and her Court dress probably about £25. What bonnets she had cost about £1 each, and 30s. was an outrageously extravagant price to pay for one. Gloves and shoes were a small item; for, although particular kinds of both are made cheaper now than they were made then, in her day there was only one quality, and that of the very best. To a woman requiring only such a (to our modern ideas) modest allowance of gowns, the pin-money was sufficient. It must not be supposed that in the instance I am quoting her life was entirely a country one. The London season was a more important episode, for the difficulties of moving were much more serious than now; and many families, having

come to London when Parliament met, remained for six months. Girls were in similar case. From £100 to £150 was a very large allowance for the daughters of the woman whose expenditure we have indicated: that included Court dress and riding habits, large items in a girl's allowance. Girls hardly ever wore silk gowns—certainly never velvet,—and the materials of which their clothes were made were of the simplest and plainest nature. A ball-gown was of white tarlatan, which cost about £3, or, if a very smart one, of net, made with endless skirts over a silk petticoat, when the wearer was well enough off to afford it; and occasionally flowers were used to trim the skirt of the dress. In the country, girls wore the plainest gowns, and changed them only for dinner: a tea-gown was unknown, and cotton prints and muslins were the usual material for summer and warm weather. Hats and bonnets were plain and cheap; often one was bought in London, and copied by the lady's-maid for the other daughters of the family.

A lady's-maid was a more important person than she is now. She made many of the dresses worn by her mistress, and altered and turned them when they had become shabby. She was not the glorified half-French dressmaker a first-rate maid is to-day. The cut was much less accurate, and dresses did not fit like gloves, which is now indispensable in a smart gown. Maids earned much lower wages. £20 was considered very high; whereas £40 or £50 is not at all out of the way for a first-rate French maid now. No class encourage

the constant change of fashion more than they, for every gown discarded by their mistress is theirs, and they wear it or sell it ; if they wear it, they often look smarter in it than its original owner looked. There was much less variety in dress formerly ; clothes lasted much longer, and women wore the same gown for a greater length of time ; and, with modes that changed less often, a gown took longer to become old-fashioned. Plainness of dress, the rule among the rich and well-born, was in greater measure the rule among the less exalted. The wife of a small country gentleman, or clergyman, living always in the country, had perhaps her two day-gowns and her one evening-gown a year, and her daughters were apparelled with equal simplicity. They bought their things at the best draper's in the nearest large country town, and the local dressmaker—one of the busiest and most important personages in the locality—made them up. I well remember the dressmaker of a large county town in Scotland who went from one house to another making up the dresses of the neighbourhood : and how keen was the competition for her services ! She copied the one or two mantles and gowns got from London ; and did so with fidelity and taste, although nowadays her productions would be considered a violence to form and fashion.

Such was the manner in which the majority of women in England contrived to dress themselves. It was primitive ; but it was as interesting and important as the gorgeous toilettes worn by ladies of fashion nowadays ; and the home-made things produced much

pleasure in the minds of their wearers. The purchase of a silk or a satin gown in those days was a great event. The gown cost a great deal. It was of the best quality ; and it often lasted a lifetime—certainly for years. One can easily see how good all material was by the wardrobes which still remain in some old houses, and are only now produced for theatrical purposes. The satins and the brocades which stood by themselves are no fiction, but realities ; and in the goodness of the material lay the secret of the economy in dress. All material, whether silk or stuff, was much dearer ; but it was so much better that it lasted twice the time, and there was, therefore, no necessity for the constant change of fashion which the introduction of cheaper stuffs has brought about, the excellence of the material more than compensating for the expense of making it up.

The cheapening of materials has been brought about only by lowering the standard of excellence ; and in no case are the cheap goods of to-day to be compared in wear or in quality with those sold years ago, which wore until the wearers were tired of them, and lasted for years, and only at long intervals gladdened the heart of the lady's-maid by becoming hers. The silks and the satins of to-day are half-cotton. No better example can be mentioned than the endless quantities of so-called satins which, being cheap, are the only things women will look at. They consist principally of a heavy cotton warp with the slightest film of silk shot over it, and a basting of paste which is technically



known as "potage." The appearance of many such satins is not unfamiliar after a few days' wear, or half-an-hour before a fire, when the lustrous sheen disappears, and the glory of the satin is departed. This is true also of woollen goods, made of short staple wools dyed in the piece, instead of, as formerly, in the yarn, some of which tear and wear into holes before they have been many weeks in use. The cost of making-up such rubbish is just as great as if the material were the costliest ; for the expense of making-up has almost doubled, and for one good dress two or three of the inferior quality are required, and the cost is doubled or trebled by the extra making-up. The greatly-increased expenditure in dress lies in the making-up of clothes. We all know that in estimating the expense of a gown the cost of the material is the most unimportant item ; and no remark is more familiar, in discussing such matters, than, in answer to an exclamation as to the expense of a gown, "O ! but I paid nothing for the stuff !" The tailor-made gown is one of the prettiest but most expensive of fashions ; for women generally find their own cloth or homespun, and the tailor's charges are enormously in excess of the cost of the material. The materials for two such gowns were bought the other day in the Highlands for £4, and the tailor's charge for making the gowns was £15 a-piece. It is in the expense of making-up that the greatly increased cost of dress is to be found. There are other causes, of which the main ones are—

(a) The rise in salaries and wages (especially for



best hands), which are double or treble those of thirty years ago.

(b) The shortening of the hours of work, which are now regulated by law. This, perhaps, is the greatest element in work-room expenses. Formerly, in the press of the season, perhaps for two months, all hands worked till midnight if necessary, and, as a rule, worked willingly, to get their employers over the pinch; certainly in good houses the extra work was willingly done. Under the Factory Acts, work-rooms can be open only for a limited period of hours, and heavy penalties are inflicted for infringements of the law. In order that the work of to-day may be overtaken, the staff has been largely increased; and, in order that the staff shall remain efficient, it has to be kept together throughout the year, whether there is work or not. Good work-room hands cannot be got together and dismissed as business fluctuates.

(c) The fashions of late years which have entailed excessively elaborate *façons*. The cost of manual labour and the work-room expenses entailed in carrying out the fantastic requirements of an ever-changing mode have become proportionately heavier.

(d) Formerly a few leading "models," well selected in Paris, and typical of the fashions prevailing during the season, would suffice; and by these the best-dressed ladies in the land were content to be guided in their selection and orders. Now ladies expect to see new models and a new fashion almost every week; if new ones do not exist, they have to be invented. The

enormous quantity of work to be turned out to satisfy the craze for varied dresses, and the consequent large rise in wages, salaries, and establishments, entail a very appreciable effort among dressmakers to obtain efficient hands. This, with the short hours of work, fully accounts for the costly item of making-up.

The foregoing reasons are nearly sufficient in themselves to show why dressing costs so very much more now than it formerly cost ; but by far the most potent cause is the craze among women to over-dress themselves and multiply their gowns. It is no uncommon thing for people to wear four or five gowns a day ; and, much as many women in London err in this respect, perhaps a smart country house is the best place in which to see the grievous extent to which the *luxe* is carried. It used not to be necessary to vary one's clothes so often, nor was it akin to social sin to be seen twice during a visit in the same gown ; but no smartly-dressed woman with any respect for her reputation in that respect would allow such a calamity now. Gowns must be changed : morning, walking, afternoon, evening, each has its separate apparel ; and the tea-gown, which is an invention of the last few years, is perhaps the most gorgeous and extravagant in the list. Who does not know the aspect of a magnificently-furnished drawing-room in a large country house at 5.30, with its well-shaded lamps and candles throwing a subdued light over a scene as brilliant as any evening entertainment, where the brocades and silks and lace and flashing jewels make

all observers rub their eyes, and wonder whether this fairy-scene is not a dream? Still, the scene at dinner outdoes the tea-party a thousandfold. It used to be said that women dressed to please men. If so, those days are passed. Now they dress to outvie one another. At least, one cannot but think so, for, as a rule, men notice the *ensemble* only: the details are absolutely thrown away on them: and if the object of women were to attract men a much smaller outlay would suffice. It is not only the outward garment that is splendid and varied: another modern expense in the dress of women is the magnificence of their underlinen. Every article of a smartly-dressed woman's linen is a work of art. The finest linen and the costliest laces are *de rigueur*; the countless petticoats and the perpetual change of *chaussure* (every gown having its shoes and stockings to match) constitute other items in the list of necessary articles; and when one comes to reckon the endless toilettes of a year, with their indispensable accessories, one sees easily how impossible it is for any woman smartly-dressed to be so economically. Women of the highest rank in England used to consider £300 or £400 a year ample for pin-money, and out of that helped others less rich than themselves; but that is ridiculously out of proportion to the sums spent by any woman who wishes to be well dressed. If married women can afford to spend double or treble what their mothers spent, and their husbands are able and willing to let them do so, it is only injurious indirectly, perhaps, in a way I shall

indicate later ; but it is directly very hard on girls, who, as a rule, have not large allowances, and must, under modern conditions of fashion, emulate as much as possible the example of the young married woman. Girls are handicapped hardly enough, as it is, against this new competitor, who in so many ways trenches on their place in society ; and their only hope is to try and imitate the real article as much as possible : so they have to dress out of an allowance of less than half that which she spends. In their smaller way, they must have silk, satin, and brocade ; and in this change the great extra expense occurs, girls having discarded all the light and simple, for heavy and rich, materials. Girls are now as much *en évidence* as married women. Formerly they went out in a moderate way, and were not to be seen at many of the places which they now frequent. Very few girls went to race-meetings, and lawn-tennis and afternoon parties (all requiring their own toilettes) were not then the fashion. Three or four balls a week during the season was a fair allowance. Now two or three a night is a frequent activity. The good old custom of wearing out their London dresses in the country was then in vogue. Now by the end of a season the fashion has all changed : gowns are out of date : and no one can look dowdy now-a-days and wear the dresses of the last year. Thus, the £100 or £150 which more than satisfied girls thirty or forty years ago has increased to £250 and £300, and even at that figure girls find it impossible to make both ends meet.

There is an obvious moral to be drawn from the modern extravagance of girls. Fathers may be able and indulgent enough to provide what seems a large sum for their dress ; but no one else can ; and may not the impossibility of doing so, and the dread of the same spirit of extravagance throughout, act as a deterrent against marriage ? Many men desire to marry ; but before taking the final step they ponder over the costly necessities which a wife entails.

It seems impossible to stem the current and stop the extravagance which is the fashion. The old saying, "It is good for trade," is true in a certain sense ; but it does not encourage English manufacture, for the cheap materials, as well as the richest and most extravagant foreign, undersell our English productions. The cutters-out and the tailors are mostly French and German ; which is not for the benefit of the dress-makers or of the drapers, although it is the custom to say that they make large fortunes from the labour of the foreigners. Very careful enquiry has satisfied me that the profits of both are much less than they were thirty or forty years ago. The strain of competition entails a much larger turnover to produce profit. The whole staff of every business establishment has to be kept up on a much larger scale as women become more exacting in their requirements about attention and facilities for shopping. The system of credit given by dressmakers must tend to diminish their profits further. Long ago nearly all the customers of the best milliners in London were women who paid their bills half-yearly, and ordered

only what they could pay for. One cannot shut one's eyes to the fact that there are now many women, the smallness of whose incomes makes it impossible for them to pay for their clothes, who must be in debt to their dressmakers. Then, milliners now dress ladies who are *répandu* in society for nothing, or for a nominal sum, for the sake of advertisement.

One of the most astounding instances of the tyranny of the goddess Fashion is the staunch way in which a style is adopted, if it becomes established, irrespectively of its merits, artistic or other. Every woman, whatever her size and shape, complexion or age, adopts it. How vividly we recall the figures of middle-aged women, largely-developed, fat, with gowns so tight that the whole of their outlines were visible, when it was the fashion to wear gowns tied back behind! Can we forget the discomfort we underwent in the days when we wore bonnets higher than Papal crowns, when sitting up in a close carriage was an impossibility? or the agony many underwent in the early days of high-heeled shoes? or when, perched on one's toes in an attitude at once unbecoming and painful, the effect of which was to destroy the shape of the foot, women not only walked and danced in those instruments of torture with a heroism worthy of a better cause,—simply because it was the fashion?

There is another point from which we must look at the increased extravagance and constant change of fashion, and in some ways a very sad one—namely, the effect which the example of our rich women is having on the

women of the working classes. Every class imitates the class above it, and tries to sweep away the lines of demarcation ; and this is particularly the case with women. The East-end factory girl, with her "Gainsborough" hat and her "Bang," is only a coarse imitation of what she thinks the lady of fashion in the West-end must be ; and the servant-maid who spends all her small wages in a slavish imitation of her mistress, and emerges up the area steps on Sunday so gorgeously apparelled that she is almost unrecognisable, is another instance, and one that comes home to us more nearly. The high-heeled shoes which have deformed the feet of most of our servant-girls, the tight stays which are ruining their digestions, the tawdry finery and the flashy material of which their clothes are made,—are all worn because their mistresses wear things like them. Girls adopt them because they are cheap and do not last long enough to be dowdy and out of fashion ; and thus we see a reproduction in another class of what we deplore in our own. No servant will buy a good stuff to make a gown, for it will not wear out. Although the stuff may remain sufficiently modish to satisfy inexorable Fashion, taste will change, and, as the gown cannot be cut about to be the current style, the girls year by year buy worthless materials, which are bad in themselves, extravagant in wear ; and on these, constantly changing them to be in the fashion, they spend their earnings. In their case, the cost of making-up is nearly double the value of the material, for now no gown with any



pretension to be in the fashion can be made up for less than 10s.; formerly it was never more than 7s. 6d. It is the same with factory-girls and other girls. What they can save out of their poor wages to buy themselves clothes is misspent, in the same way, in the large drapery shops and in the second-hand-clothes shops. In the East-end of London, and in parts where manufactures abound, and working people live, it would be almost impossible to find any good and durable material, as there is no demand for it; and the poor, like the girls, look only for what is cheap. It would be ridiculous to say that cheap clothing is not a great boon to the poor, and that the cheapening of boots and shoes, even at the cost of diminishing their serviceableness, is not one of the greatest blessings they enjoy; but there is another side even to that question. The cheap boots of to-day neither wear nor mend as the old-fashioned hand-made ones used to. There is no unmixed good, no unmixed evil, in life; but it is certain that cheap clothing and cheap finery have tended to destroy thrift among the working women of England, and, by enabling them to dress out of their station, has increased the temptations with which their life abounds. The frequent change of fashion affects the working classes materially as well as morally. The revival of a particular fashion, such as a new trimming, or a new material for bonnets, or particular flowers, gives work and constant employment to a vast number of hands, especially women; and, for a time, work and wages are plenty. Suddenly, without any reason or warning, the

fiat goes forth that such things are no longer the mode, and are to be discarded: with the result that many of the workers, who have been at some pains to learn how to make those particular articles, are thrown out of employ; and before they have time to learn the new fancy either it is imported cheaply from abroad or it is taken up and made in some other locality, leaving the manufacturer with stocks which he can get rid of only at a ruinous sacrifice.

In the matter of expenditure in dress and ever-varying fashion wisdom seems to be powerless. Nothing can be simpler and less extravagant than the example set by our Royal Family. Whilst dressing and looking more beautiful than any other English woman, the Princess of Wales has never appeared extravagant; and we know that in certain instances she has thrown her great influence into the scale against changes and fashions which she considered *bizarre* and unbecoming. Still, she has been able to control only to a certain extent. The great dressing section of society is not to be controlled by any influence, howsoever august, when it can read of its toilettes in all the society papers of the day. The recapitulation of the magnificence of the Drawing-Room gown of Lady So-and-so, or of the Church-Parade gown of Mrs. So-and-so, or of the list of gowns made for a fashionable bride, is what the soul of the average woman cannot resist. Take the best, simplest, and nicest of women, and talk to her of her clothes and chifions, and she will listen with deep and pleased interest; and even a senior wrangler

considers her gowns a matter of no small importance. Such, however, are not the women who are creating the evil of which we complain. It is the women who live for enjoyment, whose personal adornment is the absorbing subject of their lives, that are setting the example of extravagance, and are injuring every class, above and below, by ministering to the silliest of woman's weaknesses.

The desire of every class to live up to the one above it, to emulate its frailties, to copy its foibles, is sapping our social strength. On all sides we hear of agricultural distress, diminished rents, and decreasing incomes; yet we eat, and drink, and spend our money, merrily; and our women dress as magnificently as if there were no signs of the stern crisis through which the country has to pass, or of the poverty and distress at our doors. There are thousands out of work, children and women wanting food, and needs for help on every side, which stand out in sharp contrast with the luxury and extravagance we see around us, and should warn us that a day of reckoning may not be far off for ourselves. If women determined to discard the ornaments, the garnitures, the trimmings, and the stuffs, of French manufacture, and would return to the simplicity and plainness of dress which satisfied their mothers and grandmothers, they would give a stimulus to home production; and, if they insisted on a certain standard of excellence in the material they purchased, they would soon find their example followed by women of all classes. I do not intend for a moment to imply that a

miracle would be wrought ; but the wise change would undoubtedly give permanent employment to many thousands who have suffered severely from the caprices of fashion, and would remove the reproach, now resting upon English women, that they are indifferent to serious social obligations.

## THE CRINOLINE.

Recently there were ominous rumours that the gradual widening of women's skirts at the bottom meant something more than a momentary change in the cut of garments. There seems little doubt that, had not the women of England been on the alert, out of the new umbrella skirt our old friend the crinoline would have come.

Indeed, unless we are wary, we may yet find ourselves arrayed in the "hoop" of 1855. We usually obey the dictates of fashion, even at the sacrifice of comfort; but nothing can exceed the animosity with which the suggestion of crinoline has been received. "John Strange Winter" and at least seven thousand Amazons are ready to take the field against the revivalists. Why crinoline should be more objectionable than any other hideous fashion is a mystery; but, undoubtedly, some reason, all the more powerful because of its obscurity, has been at work. The Anti-Crinoline League is a stern reality.

The Leaguers can be considered well-advised in provoking a discussion only if they are satisfied that an irruption of the hated garment may occur. An appre-

hension which everyone is discussing is apt to realise itself. No one knows better than every member of the Anti-Crinoline League that were the umbrella skirt to develop into one with a hoop at the bottom, which in time would blossom into other hoops above it, vows and protestations would be of no avail. It is even possible that prominent members might find themselves obliged to sacrifice their principles and wear the shameful garment.

The crinoline has remarkable recuperative power. It has survived the assaults of three hundred years, and, like influenza, is recurrent. The hoop has always had a great attraction. Women have never lost the chance of encasing themselves in it whenever possible. It seems to have been originally an English fashion (it was not adopted in France until the Empress Eugénie introduced it in the fifties) dating from the days of Queen Elizabeth, when it formed part of a great whalebone structure, the upper portion shaped like a cuirass, and attached to the hoops of the skirt, the material of which came down to the ground, without any folds, like a bell. It lived throughout her reign, and through that of James I.; but disappeared before the Puritan feeling of the Commonwealth. It appeared again in 1711, as the hoop pure and simple, which differed from the fardingale in being gathered at the waist. Sir Roger de Coverley, in speaking of one of his ancestresses, says, "My great-great-grandmother has on the new-fashioned petticoat; and except that the modern is gathered at the waist, my grandmother looks

as if she stood in a great drum, whereas the ladies now walk as if they were in a go-cart." The picture of the hoop lying on the floor in the night scene of *Mariage à la Mode* is well-known. In 1744, the fashion became so exaggerated that it was said that one woman occupied the space of six men. The round form was for a moment discarded, and an oblong one, raised at each side so as to show the high-heeled shoes of its wearer, came into fashion. The caricaturists of the day likened the ladies unto donkeys carrying panniers. The ladies utilised the great space by having large pockets on each side, which carried an immense quantity of small things. The hoops were made of whalebone, and were very expensive. In 1780 cane, as being able to "wear out the best whalebone," was substituted. At the end of the century hoops were worn in Court dress only. They were never so large and so inconvenient as during the latter years of the reign of George III. and the beginning of that of George IV. They were abolished by Royal command. The Royal decree did not kill the crinoline.

Between 1856 and 1866 the fashion of it flourished, and its inconveniences were immortalised by John Leech in the pages of *Punch*. In the days of its earlier adoption, crinoline never attained the dimensions of 1855, when it often measured four and even five yards in circumference, and, owing to the invention of the cheap and pliant steel hoops (which made the fortune of their inventor), it was worn by women of every class. To our modern ideas the gigantic hoop of those days seems



fantastic ; yet no one thought it so at the time. It took up a great deal of room, and made a gown expensive in material ; but we are not prepared to say that it was more ridiculous or unbecoming than the eelskin skirts and the tight-fitting jerseys of a few years later, which, like crinolines, were worn by every woman, irrespectively of her age, size, shape ; or that it was more ungainly than the limp dowdyism of its æsthetic successor. It had drawbacks which nothing could obviate ; and it added to the risk of fire. From time to time the papers chronicled "Deaths from Burning through Wearing Crinoline ;" which misadventures were taken ample advantage of by its opponents. The crinoline skirt required tact and grace in management. It had an awkward way of assuming an independent existence, and occasionally gave the impression that itself and the wearer were about to part ; there were moments when it practised the wildest vagaries, and showed an inclination to stick out in the wrong places. Shall we ever see anything which better depicts its untameable disposition than Leech's inimitable sketches of Englishwomen walking on a pier in a gale of wind, or his still more delightful sketch of "Common Objects at the Sea-side" ?

When we recall the ridicule cast upon it, and remember how much more destructive is ridicule than any other opposition, we realise what vitality fashion has. If a mode is once adopted, it is the interest of so many people to keep it going that we begin to doubt whether "John Strange Winter" and her

followers are to be victorious any more than their predecessors. It is hard that the leader of the Amazons is able to reckon only on the lukewarm support of the other section of the Dress-Reform Party. Lady Harberton, whilst disliking crinoline, evidently considers it only more objectionable than any other mode of dressing save the divided skirt, and she will not extend the hand of sympathy to the Anti-Crinoline League. "John Strange Winter" and her followers are, as has been said, beginning at the wrong end in their opposition. The wiser plan of campaign would be to boycott the crinoline quietly and say nothing about the matter. Why not form a secret league (similar to certain persevering and exasperating charitable enterprises we suffer from) every member of which would undertake to interest a dozen persons? In a very short time the Anti-Crinoline leader would have nearly all the women of England on her side, and would hurl confusion on the "capitalists and speculators" who are hatching this monstrous plot. Open opposition is of no use. It provokes hostility. If there is any real danger of a revival of what some consider an abominable fashion, anger will fan it into zealotry. If crinoline is to be the fashion, we may shriek till we are hoarse, but it will be adopted.

There are many points in its favour. It is not likely that any expressions of opinion for or against it will be delivered in high quarters. We all remember the extremely sensible answer given by the Princess of Wales when a similar attempt was made to boycott

foreign goods in favour of English ones. That lesson in political economy is pretty sure to be repeated; and, even were the Princess strongly opposed, as we are assured she is, to the revival of the crinoline, it is more than possible that her disapproval would not prevent its adoption if the tide were running strongly in its favour. It will be interesting to see how far women will be able to resist the fashion. Experience does not encourage one to expect much. The attempt to stimulate English manufactures by refusing to wear foreign silks and stuffs was not so successful as to lead one to hope for the adoption of any similar policy on this particular occasion. The real fact is that a fashion is abroad before the majority of the community hear anything about it. The autocrats of fashion decree it; and manufacturers make their stocks, which are taken by the shopkeepers and sold with pertinacity. People drift into the fashion before they know what they are about.

We must not forget that, although there are many women who dislike crinoline, there are many who will welcome its return. There are the very thin women, without æsthetic tendencies, who, consciously, have looked miserably ugly in the clinging garments of recent years. There are the women, with sloping shoulders, who have a point of beauty hidden under the wide sleeves which we should discard with the adoption of crinoline. There are women, with short legs, to whom the width of skirt, and the length which will come with it, will be welcome; and there are stout

women, who will hope to lose the sense of their proportions in the debateable space which may be crinoline or something more substantial. The opponents of the crinoline on artistic grounds forget that during the last forty years the stature of women in England has increased. Nothing is more remarkable than the numbers of well-grown girls one sees everywhere ; on whom crinoline, properly controlled, will be becoming, adding dignity and grace to their appearance. An English-woman "divinely tall" wears anything well ; and nothing is more pleasing on a tall slight woman than a somewhat extended and voluminous skirt. Many of us can recall some of the well-known beauties of the crinoline days. Can we honestly say that they did not look quite as beautiful and graceful as their successors of an artistic time, or that their less-favoured sisters looked worse by reason of their wearing the hoop ? No pretty woman ever looked ugly because she wore a gown of unbecoming fashion, and no ugly woman ever looked uglier for the same reason.

That there is much to be said for crinoline on hygienic grounds must be obvious. Now we shall have no trailing skirts which act as a mud-brush on the pavement and a dirt-trap in the house. What can be dirtier, uglier, more unhealthy, than the half-train skirt of a recent year, which had none of the virtues of a short tidy petticoat, and none of the grace of a long train ? We can now have clean boots and stockings, instead of those which needed cleaning every time we came in from walking in dirty and bedraggled petticoats.

To women who are obliged to walk about much, crinoline would be a boon. Nothing is so fatiguing as a skirt which is in one's way constantly. Facing a wind in a clinging skirt is like walking as if one "hobbled." Crinoline will give women a freer use of their lower limbs.

The reappearance of crinoline must produce a change in some of the outdoor games of women. Lawn-tennis will be hardly possible in a crinoline. The quick, active movement, the constant change of attitude, the jumping to reach a ball, would be impossible with an inflated skirt. Croquet will possibly reign once more : a game of slower and more graceful movements, in the pursuit of which tender relations may be carried on. This thought will reconcile to the adoption of crinoline many women who are debarred by physical obstacles from joining in the outdoor games of their younger neighbours.

There are obvious drawbacks to the adoption of crinoline ; but they are not insuperable if we resolve to limit its size. One is that if it is allowed to attain the size it reached between 1855 and 1866 we shall find ourselves obliged to make some changes in our social arrangements and in many of the appliances of life. We cannot increase the size of our doors or of our rooms at will. Therefore we must limit our hospitality. Houses which sufficed for an artistic style of dress will not be spacious enough for the requirements of crinoline. As the tendency is nowadays for every fashion to become exaggerated, we shall be obliged to subdue

our requirements so as to give full scope to those of our maids. If our crinoline measures three or four yards round, theirs will be double the circumference. It must, seriously, make some difference in the furniture and arrangement of rooms; for with large skirts, beyond the control of the wearer, it will be inconvenient, almost impossible, to move about in the drawing-room, with its endless ornaments, spindle-legged chairs, and sofas. We shall require more solid and heavy furniture, able to withstand perpetual assaults. One unmixed mercy will be the complete disappearance of those terrible decorations, Japanese fans, umbrellas, etc., with which we are all familiar. They would literally be swept away in the tempest created by the entrance of a few voluminous crinolines. One can hardly picture what a crowded Drawing Room would be at Buckingham Palace under a new reign of crinoline. It was somewhat of an ordeal when crinoline was in fashion and fewer people attended. Who can forget the anxiety caused when the wearer entered the surging crowd? Crinolines went up on one side, or on the other, according to pressure; or, what was more terrible than all, some slight disarrangement behind forced them out in front; and away from all help, and unable to extricate oneself from the difficulty, one had to emerge with what composure one could command from the crowd, in a vain endeavour to soothe the movements of an apparatus which had emancipated itself from all control.

There is one objection to the proposed introduction

of crinoline to which no one seems to have attached much importance, an objection which, viewed from an Englishwoman's and patriotic point of view, has some considerations worthy of attention. If crinoline is again imposed on us, it will be the result of foreign dictation and oppression. We are told that "certain firms" on the Continent are at the bottom of the conspiracy. This is surely unbearable, and if the Anti-Crinoline League had appealed to the sentimental and national side of womankind we should have thrown all our sympathies and influence into the scale. We know what the German and the Jew have done for our working people. We are vehemently in favour of the expulsion of foreigners. "England for the English" is the watchword of every Briton. In so important a matter, one affecting so keenly the whole populace of England, this objection should not have been overlooked. Adopting fashions which have their origin in France, if they are desirable, has always been the gracious and condescending *rôle* of the fair sex here; but to have a fashion ugly, indecent, unbecoming, crammed down one's throat, or tied round one's waist, at the bidding of a Foreign Power which we have always held at defiance is surely out of reason.

There is one section of the community, not an unimportant one, which has hitherto kept silence in the controversy; and we are waiting with anxiety to hear its opinion, which must have weight. The fathers and brothers of England, with the exception of one or two medical men who have opposed the introduction of



crinoline on account of the supposed danger of fire, are dumb. The fears it has excited among women do not appear to have appealed to them. A few men may have privately voted it "beastly;" but this opinion, after all, carries no great weight. It may be that they are curiously waiting to know what will come of the movement of resistance to that unseen power which rules half the world of society. May one suggest, also, that the political section of mankind is watching the struggle with a certain interest? The movement really may have some bearing on politics. It would surely be a little unjust at a moment when women are throwing themselves with fresh ardour into political life, and are not only pulling the strings behind the scenes, but preparing to enter the great Chamber of Representatives itself, to handicap them in their approach to the post of duty. If the hoop is adopted it will be difficult indeed to find room for the lady politician on the floor of the House, or even on the Terrace. Can it be that some Machiavellian plot is on foot to sweep away those privileges which have added a charm and new interest to the life of the ardent as well as the frivolous political woman? It may be, it is true, that, should the crinoline vanquish us, a *modus vivendi* will be discovered. Perhaps a turnstile might be erected, before passing which the aggressive hoop should be discarded; or the number of hooped ladies to be admitted at one time might be limited. With those restrictions, the House might not seriously unite to boycott crinoline—except on the ground that the hoop petti-

coat would give increased facilities for the concealment of dynamite.

Seriously, there is no doubt that masculine opinion upon women's power of combination and of forming an independent judgment in questions more important than that of dress will be largely influenced by the manner in which this question is settled. The weakness of the position of those women who oppose change lies in the fact that their objections rest, not on the use of the crinoline, but on its abuse. The fear which its reappearance has excited is due to the fact that in dress, as in all other matters, women are not to be trusted to avoid excess. They have no taste for the Aristotelian mean. If we could feel sure that crinoline would never expand to gigantic circumference we could all be indifferent about it.

If the threatened invasion by crinoline is successful, we shall, before the final moment, hear the voice of man raised in emphatic protest. The only new changes in women's dress that can affect men seriously are the crinoline and the divided skirt: the first because its adoption would entail a great deal of personal inconvenience and discomfort to the other sex. As for the divided skirt: It is a more serious infringement of masculine rights than even the wildest and most ambitious of the emancipated sisterhood can hope to carry out. Still, crinoline in its heyday of glory and insolence did not change the position or the feeling of men towards women. Lovers wooed and won their mistresses in hoops; never for one moment did the

old story cease to be told, even although it had to be whispered at a distance of many feet. Women were as fascinating in their steel-girt days as they are now ; society held on its way merrily ; balls, dinners, teas, croquet, and all the amusements of life, went on. Human nature does not change as the garments it is clothed in do ; and in the eyes of men the women they adore will always be the same, with hoops or without them.

Let us hope, however, that the agitation caused by the mere suggestion of crinoline has destroyed its chances of life, and that in the unobjectionable material called " crin " the happy compromise may be found. If so, we shall be at rest, and the Anti-Crinoline League and the Dress Reform Association may lie down in peace together ; and, no doubt the ominous rumours of revolt at Westminster, and of possible attempts to crush the political aspirations of women by a side attack, will subside, or be confined only to the members of a resourceless Ministry, jealous of the bloodless victory won by the women of England over their foreign oppressors.

## HELPING THE FALLEN.

Until recently, the condition of the fallen women in our large towns was considered hopeless. Such women, deserted by the men who had ruined them, abandoned by friends and relations, seemed to have no prospect but that of the workhouse. Formerly it was not the fashion to hold out to them the hand of fellowship. When a woman wandered from the path of virtue, the door of society was relentlessly barred against her, and over the portals of the new home were inscribed the words, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." No matter how great the sacrifice she was prepared to make, no one would engage a fallen girl to fill even the lowliest place in domestic service; and among the trades in which women were employed a girl known to have taken a false step stood little chance of work. Every outlet in this country was closed; and, as all the colonial-emigration agencies were strict in inquiries as to the respectability and the past life of those intending to emigrate, it was impossible, by sending a woman to a new country where her fault was unknown, howsoever convinced those interested in her might be of her repentance, to help her. Unless,

therefore, a woman's relations were willing to receive her back, and assist her in supporting herself and her child, the workhouse was her only refuge; and, to those who knew anything of the condition of the workhouse, that was almost as bad as leaving her to struggle for the means of subsistence elsewhere. In the workhouse, until her child was old enough to be weaned, she was allowed to keep it with her, or, rather, to live in the nursery with it. The workhouse nursery was a long, low, ill-ventilated room at the top of the house, where the children and mothers passed the day, had their meals, and slept at night. It was full of crying, suffering children, some with mothers to attend to them, and some without, the latter given to the care of inmates with children of their own. Many of the children were diseased creatures; and in contact with them the more healthy children grew up pale, thin, and miserable. The workhouse nursery combined all the worst influences that could be brought to bear on a fallen woman. She passed her life without discipline and moral training; she lived in an atmosphere as bad physically as morally; and her child was a source of weariness to her, as its little ailments required her constant attention. The tone of the place tended to degrade completely a character already low. Even the natural love for her child was exposed to tests that tried it sorely. She left the nursery for the permanent and more active life of the workhouse, fully prepared to imbibe the poison which it was too likely to impart.

There are few sights more heart-rending than that which the nursery of a large metropolitan workhouse once presented. Fifty or sixty children, from a month to three years old, the majority of whom were wan, ill, unhealthy, with the careworn expression of old people, or the wistful look of suffering, were a spectacle not easily effaced from memory. There was nothing to relieve the cheerlessness of the room. In one corner were two or three little cots with suffering babies, some of them dying, with no loving mother or nurse to do what tenderness could to ease their pain; and, saddest, perhaps, of all, the long row of little low chairs, into which were strapped five or six children, old enough to sit up, but not strong enough to walk, who, with eager eyes, looked for some one to lift them out and give them the much-longed-for walk about the room. From this preparatory stage of the workhouse life, where no attempt was ever made to foster the maternal love, the woman, after a year or two, was sent on into the body of the workhouse, to be put to such tasks as she was found fitted for, either in the kitchen or in the laundry. Life in the ordinary wards of a workhouse was as fruitful of evil as life in the nursery.

Many able-bodied inmates of the workhouse were fallen women who, having no friends willing to assist them, and no other means of subsistence, were constrained to rely upon the parish during the remainder of their lives. The majority, but for their one sin, were harmless enough, and contented to accept the

only lot which was open to them. Among them, however, from time to time, came many of the more hardened and abandoned of the class to which they belonged—women, from the very humblest ranks, who, from want, or disease, or drink, were too low for almost any hospital treatment, and were driven for a season to seek the shelter of the workhouse. Their stay was not permanent, nor long ; but it was of quite sufficient duration to work an amount of evil that is difficult to calculate. Howsoever strict the discipline or perfect the management of any workhouse, it would be impossible to separate in its daily life the more degraded from the less degraded of its inmates. There is no machinery for doing so ; and in a large institution, with its hundreds or thousands of inmates, such an arrangement would be out of the question. Therefore, in their daily life, in the sleeping and in the living rooms, the worst women were brought into hourly contact with some of the girls from the nursery, and they, although deteriorated by their stay there, would be pure in comparison with the women. It would not necessarily follow that all the younger women had accepted their fate as inevitable, or were lost to all feelings of shame and of repentance ; yet all of them were compelled to pass their days in the companionship of women who had long since cast to the winds the rags of modesty and shame, but still possessed a good-hearted roughness and friendliness. In recounting the downward history of her career, the more abandoned and hardened woman would



dwell on the fun, the excitement, the gaiety, of its different stages, always keeping silent (even if for the moment she had not forgotten) about its squalor, misery, and degradation. Foul language and oaths were used, and the darkest page of the woman's life was discussed with such freedom and absence of shame that the less corrupted women would become habituated to aspects of vice from which they would have shrunk a few weeks before. The poison would sink into their souls, and in mind and body they would become nearly as degraded as their more sinful sisters. If it were possible in the management of a workhouse to separate the classes so as to prevent the more abandoned women from coming into contact with the others, the harm done by a short term of residence in the house would be comparatively insignificant; but when both classes are together in daily and hourly communication the infection of evil spreads just as quickly as scarlet fever or measles in a school, and goes through the whole community, leaving terrible and lasting effects.

The knowledge that the workhouse was almost a certain stepping-stone to the lower life of the streets made those interested in rescue work desirous of saving young women and girls from entering it at all, or, if that was unavoidable, of shortening their sojourn as much as possible; but for a long time the practical troubles were great. From the difficulty of getting money, or even sympathy, the few women and men who took the matter up were obliged to work in a

circumscribed and tentative way. The subject could not be discussed openly ; and for a long time the prospect of helping the weak creatures who needed help and sympathy so sorely was a dream indulged in only by a few enthusiastic women, who, struggling against opposition and discouragement, clung to the hope that public opinion might change, and the charity of some portion of the community be directed towards them and their projects. Now the long-desired change has come, and for the moment a great deal of the sympathy and the charity of the wealthy in England is being lavished on homes and penitentiaries for rescuing the fallen. That numbers of women have been restored to a respectable life, and have regained a position in the world that twenty years ago seemed impossible, is a fact ; and that the work as a whole has been done well is also true. In this country, however, when the sympathy or the interest of the community in any particular direction or object is awakened, it generally overreaches itself and shakes off all restraint, and, remembering only its shortcomings in the past, endeavours, by misdirected zeal, to expiate its apathy. We are now passing through this stage of public expiation, and are likely, from excess of zeal, to carry on a campaign of rescue in a manner calculated to do more evil than good. It would be well, therefore, to consider the classes that can be helped, and what are the means at our disposal.

The moral standpoints from which the upper and the lower classes in this country view the matter are entirely different. The penalty paid by an unmarried

woman of the upper classes who ceases to be virtuous is ostracism. Every door is closed to her; her name ceases to be mentioned; and those nearest to her are generally her sternest judges. With the poor nothing is more curious than the expression of incredulous surprise with which they receive the statement that such pains and penalties overtake their richer and better-born sister when she falls. To the majority the chief reproach is that the sin has brought its punishment, and that for the remainder of their life they will have to support that burden. It would be unjust, therefore, to judge the woman of the lower classes by the standard that applies to the upper. If we compare the life of a well brought-up and well cared-for daughter of the better class, shielded from temptation and from knowledge of the vice of the world around her, with the life of most of the girls of the poorer classes, whether in the country or in large towns, reared in familiarity with men, living and sleeping in the same room with father, mother, brothers, and sisters, we shall realise that it is impossible to apply one test to both. The poorer girl is not necessarily impure because she has never enjoyed the safeguard of the rich. Perhaps in some ways her simpler knowledge is as a shield. When she is obliged to leave home for service we have no right to blame her because, if chaste personally, she is not pure-minded. Pure-minded, in the sense in which the term is ordinarily used, she cannot be. As all the relations of life to her are an open book, she is not influenced by the sense of

mystery and the feeling of curiosity which exist in the minds of many innocent women. Thus, whilst she may be deprived of the freshness and the delicacy of an ignorant woman, she is not in the same danger of falling.

Still, familiarity with those things does not keep women pure. The knowledge they have protects them in one direction ; but it weakens them in another. A woman may be perfectly virtuous, yet not pure-minded ; and there the difference begins between the way in which women of the upper and those of the lower classes view the subject. A poor woman is perfectly well conducted, faithful to her husband, and excellent in all the essential duties of a wife and mother ; but she is not a modest-minded woman in the same sense as many a woman in a better class is. Her education and her struggling life have prevented her from being so. She brings up her daughters like herself. They are probably warned not to get into trouble and advised to be steady, not because to fall is wrong, and a sin against herself and society, but because there are practical inconveniences which may follow such an act. If one of her friends or acquaintances is less wise than herself, she is more pitied than blamed ; and the tendency is to grieve that she was so foolish as to fall, and has had to seek the shelter of the workhouse. When she comes out she is an object of intense sympathy to the neighbours, and all her experiences are listened to and discussed with great interest. It will thus be seen that in a class where there is no

strong public feeling in favour of the purity of women, and where parental authority is not enforced, girls being allowed perfect freedom of association with any men they know, and parents allowing things to take their course, it is very difficult in rescuing, or in attempting to rescue, to know where to begin. It is not often possible to appeal to the knowledge of the sorrow which the fall has caused their parents; and it is hard to convince them they have been anything but unfortunate, or that a portion at least of the wrong and sin is theirs. To tell them that they have lost what ought to be to a woman her most precious possession is to appeal to instincts unknown to them. It is, as I shall presently show, useless to dwell on the religious or on the sentimental aspect of the subject. One is baffled and disappointed at every turn, and it is only after vain attempts to rouse their better and higher feelings that one endeavours to see what effect practical or material influences have on them. On the whole, the latter way of dealing with the difficulty seems the best. To come to a woman in this desolate and forlorn position with any of the common-places of religion irritates her. She is conscious of the sin and of her weakness. Her future is dark and hopeless, and she is searching for some way of earning a living. The only means of helping her is to enable her to realise that, far as she has fallen, earthly help and pardon are forthcoming.

After she has once been convinced that she has found a friend, there is no reason to fear that she will

not respond in the amplest way to all that can be done for her. The majority of such women are as a rule good-natured and ignorant. They have never known any real moral training, and they are grateful and responsive; but there is always the weak spot somewhere in their character, and it is not difficult after a time to be able to put one's finger on it. Many of them are not born robust. They are neither physically nor morally strong, and, having gone early to service, have been overworked. How far strength of character and will depend on physical vigour is a problem that must always disturb people engaged in rescue work. Occasionally one comes across a woman with a strong and passionate nature who has recognised her position, having committed her sin with her eyes open, and is fully conscious of, and willing to accept, the consequences, in the vain hope of retaining the affection which (she fears) is likely to become a thing of the past. A woman with such a nature is certain to return to the utmost all that is done for her, and the deep love for her child is as an anchor. She is prepared for any trials, and meets them with heroism and self-sacrifice. Such women, however, are exceptions. The majority of the fallen are misled by drink and love of dress—for in such cases affection plays a very subordinate part. They feel the disgrace and desertion much less than the hopelessness of their position and the uncertainty of their future. A woman of that class is fond of her child in a way, and was fond of its father; yet in many cases when

he willingly comes forward and offers to marry her, although she have the strongest inducement to marry in the fact that she and her child will then have a legal claim on him for support, she will refuse, from a feeling of resentment for having suffered all the shame; she would rather bear the burden of supporting the child than admit the right of any paternal interference. To allow a woman of such a nature to remain for long in a workhouse, exposed to the lowering influences there, is to leave her in a moral *lazaretto* from which she must inevitably come out more degraded, or at least with a greater knowledge of evil than when she entered.

There are several considerations which are most important in rescue work, and on these being adhered to or neglected the result of the work must mainly depend. The first is the necessity of keeping the different classes of women apart—that is, of having the work so divided that the more degraded women are never brought into contact with those who are less so. Many people have tried to carry on rescue work without keeping those two elements asunder, and it has failed for the reason which made the workhouse fail before it. Having demonstrated the disadvantages of the system, one need say no more about it. The second consideration is as to the size of the home or other institution where the work is carried out. To be successful, it is necessary to have the women under supervision and control. Boarding and lodging them out with respectable women has been tried, and has proved a failure. Whether it is ever



desirable to bring many of those women together into one large institution is doubtful. On economical grounds it is the cheapest plan, and in many very large penitentiaries, where the discipline is that of a reformatory or a prison, the difficulties are much diminished ; and with the very lowest class of women, reduced by drink, disease, and poverty, to a point where only the exercise of the strictest discipline can reform them, it is salutary. Many years' experience has not tended to increase my belief that any great or lasting good can be done with the majority of such women.

At times they are so miserable, so wretched, so absolutely lost, that they grasp at any rope thrown out to save them. The rest and constant occupation of such homes for a time tame their natures ; but when the restraints are removed, and they go forth into the world once more, the craving for drink and excitement gets the mastery, and they are again overpowered. When a woman of this kind becomes, as she usually does in time, a confirmed drunkard, her case is hopeless. Women can be rescued from infamy, thieving, almost any crime, until they have taken to drink. Under restraint such a woman is quiet and well-behaved ; when the restraint is withdrawn she is terrible.

Attaching much importance to personal influence, and to individual knowledge of character, I have no hesitation in saying that for the better class of fallen women there can be no question as to the superiority of the smaller over the larger house. In a very large institution, with its hundreds of inmates, it is almost impos-

sible to acquire that personal knowledge of each woman's history and character which is necessary before her confidence can be gained and she can be brought to realise that she has found a friend in whose eyes she has an identity of her own. To feel that she is one of the herd is no satisfaction ; but to be convinced that she is a woman who has suffered and sinned, and is sorrowful, anxious to repent, and willing to be put on the road to the straight path from which she has wandered, conveys a comfort to her, and introduces a new element into her life. Up till then she has been buffeted about, with no one to help her, no one who, whilst condemning her, was moved to pity. Having found sympathy and hope, she is a different creature, with the prospect of a better future. How often has a woman felt, after making the confession of all her sins and shortcomings, and opening up the shameful page of her history, that, stern and sad as were the words of admonition and advice that have been given to her, they were nevertheless the first ray of light shed on her faltering steps ! To condone the fault is a mistake. In most cases, if a woman feels sure she has found a sister who will hold out her hand to her and lead her back to a better life, there is never any resentment against the plainest speaking.

In order to have that personal knowledge of each woman which will enable you to win her confidence and persuade her to tell you her story of temptation and sin, and so to regard you as a friend, the number in a home must be limited. No two women are alike. You

have to make allowances for dispositions, tempers, and characters, as dissimilar as possible, to adapt yourself to each, and to prevent the routine of the work from diminishing the strong personal interest you wish to impress on each woman as the motive which urges you to befriend her. The darker side of her history need never be alluded to, or but slightly—only as much as is necessary to attain the knowledge which may be wanted in order to realise how best to help her. When that is done, the new life that is before her is the subject on which to dwell. That gives her the hope of which she has been deprived. Amid no circumstances, therefore, should the number of inmates in a house exceed twenty-six or thirty, or the period of their stay be less than two months. With such numbers and during that time it is possible to obtain an insight into each woman's disposition, to form an idea as to the probabilities of saving her, and to enable those put over her to know her capabilities for a particular occupation. One of the reasons why so much rescue work in this direction fails is that when a woman is anxious to begin her life outside again, and a situation is found for her, she is often sent to it without any knowledge as to whether the place is suitable for her, or whether there is any reasonable chance of her succeeding in it. It should never be forgotten that the great difficulty with which women of this class usually have to contend is their want of systematic training for domestic service. Most of them come out of poor, ill-regulated homes ; they have never been taught habits

of method or of self-restraint ; and their ignorance of the ordinary duties of a servant, as well as their love of independence and their resentment at any attempt to control them, has often been the cause of all the troubles of their life. Therefore, in the Home training it is important, if possible, to make their stay long enough to induce habits of obedience and order.\* As much benefit is derived from never losing sight of this fact as from any other part of the work. Owing to the restraints and the drudgery of domestic service in these days, the difficulty of getting servants, among the middle classes especially, is enormous ; and, partly for that reason, partly because amid such circumstances a woman commands lower wages, it is always easy to get a situation for those women. In fact, the demand for servants at some Homes exceeds the supply. The places, however, are very hard. The duties are so varied that even first-rate servants could scarcely hope to fulfil them. How can a woman obviously inferior, and against whom a bad or spiteful mistress has an easy opportunity of reproach, be expected to succeed ? Many a woman fails in her early places for one or other of those reasons, becomes disheartened, and leaves ; and the losing of a place is not to her a light matter, as it would be to a servant with better antecedents. Every place after the first is on a descending scale as to comfort and the chances of respectability ; and all because one of the most elementary parts of the business has been overlooked. Occupation in the Home, then, should be regular, and as much as

possible chosen with reference to the position a woman is to have on leaving it. From a moral as well as from a physical standpoint, work is necessary. In Homes where very large laundry businesses are carried on the physical improvement of the inmates is remarkable; and in the returns of the workhouse wards and of the lying-in hospitals it will be found that the mortality is much less among women who have come from institutions where work is regular, but rather hard than otherwise, than among those who come from places where a sedentary life is the rule.

In respect to the last point in this work, it is difficult to write plainly without running some risk of being misunderstood. It has for so long been the custom to regard the matter in a religious light, any one who attempts to approach it from another standpoint is looked on with mistrust. Still, years of work and experience have convinced me that those who begin with religion begin at the wrong end. It is important to get at the truth, to convince a woman that it is a woman like herself, who more or less understands her, knows her nature, her life, its temptations, and drawbacks, and, although more happily circumstanced than she, can enter into all that her weaker nature has suffered, who is appealing to her—who, but for the greater good fortune of her lot, might have been no better than she. It is really only by applying the true test of human sympathy, divested of any religious attributes, that a woman's confidence is won. You do not appeal to her from a higher moral posi-

tion. You appeal to her as one woman to another—a woman, on whom Providence has showered its happiest gifts, out of whose thankful heart a stream of pity and love is flowing towards an unhappy sister. When a woman understands that there is no desire or intention to approach her from the standpoint of a superior virtue, she unbends, gives you her affection, and does not hesitate to confess her shortcomings. When that result has been attained, and the victory over her won, it is easy, as it is above all things important, to convince her that there is but one strength and guidance that can keep her in the straight path, which she will find strewn with difficulties. The downward career of such a woman is one of falsehood. Her nature has become so steeped in deception that it is natural to her to feign a repentance and a religious frame of mind, which impose on those who look anxiously for such easily-wrought signs of a contrition that lasts only while it serves a purpose. It is curious to observe the manner in which some women adapt themselves to the tone of mind of those who are striving to save them. They will be religious with one who applies a religious test to their repentance: half-an-hour later, they will be prepared to go in the opposite direction with those whose views are less strict. Therefore, whilst speaking with respect and admiration for those who hold opinions on this point opposed to my own, and whilst recognising the magnitude and value of the work they have done, I must say that every day's experience convinces me that, unless you are



prepared to stretch out a hand to supply the material wants of a woman, your efforts will be wasted. When all that can be done to help her materially is accomplished, and her face is set to the point whence her better life is to begin, the story of a Divine life, full of sorrows and temptations, can be dwelt on with hope. There is no one who needs the consolation and strength that religious belief gives more than such a woman ; but it should not be offered until she is attuned to it. When she is so inclined, there is no safeguard like the thought of that stainless Life.

It is not, however, with her departure to service that the work of rescue ceases. Then, perhaps, the most troublesome part of it begins. It is worse than useless to launch anyone straight from the quiet and discipline of a Home into a place where everything is carried on with the irregularity of an English middle-class establishment, where the work is heavy and continuous, and there is nothing at hand to diminish the perpetual strain on the servant's mind and body : where she has to be nurse, cook, house-maid, and parlour-maid,—everything in turns ;—to do everything, forget nothing, and be the first to rise and the last to go to bed, without having had a moment's rest or a regular meal during the day. Then come the severest tests to a woman's sincerity ; and it is one of the most cheering parts of the work that, while such is the life on which the majority of women embark on leaving the Home, the failures are so few. It is at this time that the sympathy, the personal friendship, and the influence,



of a woman—a lady if possible—are of inestimable value. The friendship of people of their own class they possess; but the friendship and the sympathy of a woman socially and morally better than themselves elevate them. A colour is given to their lives. Nothing enables them to remain virtuous, and to tolerate the harshness of life, so surely as the consciousness of such a friendship, to which they may look for advice, help, encouragement,—for everything, in short, that can be included in the word “friendship” in its best and widest sense.

It is a comprehensive friendship. One is called on to attend to and give advice on a multiplicity of matters that might well puzzle the wisest; but one has to be prepared, and to impress on the poor women the fact that one is always ready with some solution or remedy for the complications which arise from time to time. The correspondence such work entails is enormous; for even the fortunate ones do not like dropping out of recollection, and, apart from the mass of writing which the everyday work of the Home necessitates, one would be very unwilling to leave unanswered the Christmas or New-Year letters from women who are prospering and happy, but have not forgotten the woman who came to them in the dark hours of shame and sorrow, and have responded to that help so fully that they can now look back on the past as upon a hideous dream.

The most softening and powerful influence with many women is the love of their child. With some it

is all-absorbing, and when it is so one need never fear for the mother's future. Many women, on the other hand, are indifferent, not wishing the child to die, but performing their duty to it, such as paying for its support and clothing, in a perfunctory manner, and evincing no interest in it one way or another. Even in such cases, that the child should live is very important ; for with those in whose breasts the maternal instinct is dumb—one wonders that it should ever be otherwise—the existence of the child is a check on any tendency to relapse into immorality, which they probably might do were it dead. Thus, for most women, it is better that the unwelcome little one should live. The mother who is careless is protected by it against herself ; and to the mother who loves it, it is the one being in the world, shameful although its existence is, on whom she can lavish affection. It is often said, How can she care for a child which is a symbol of shame, and will be a burden for years ? To a superficial observer, this seems unanswerable. The maternal instinct, however, is so strong in woman that, bad as she often is, there always remains one break in the clouds of her dark life, the love of her child ; and I have seldom seen more genuine grief than that of an erring mother when her babe died.

The children are too often neglected from the inability of mothers to keep up the payments for their support ; and where, as is frequently the case, the wages are small, and not paid regularly, the foster-mother is less careful, and they die, not so much from

starvation as from over-feeding with food they cannot digest, which is given them because it is cheaper and more easily procurable than the milk that should, at a tender age, be their only diet. It is always important to make a woman realise that the responsibility of supporting the child rests on her, on her alone. To help her by giving her money is ill-advised. One method that has been tried with girls who were unfit for good situations, and could only earn sufficient wages to pay for the child, is to contribute from time to time to their outfit, making it a condition of so doing that their entire earnings are to be paid to the foster-mother. On the whole, this is the safest and least objectionable way of helping them.

In many cases, especially when the child is dead, if emigration were possible, it would be by far the best means of saving a woman. If she could go to a new country where her story was unknown, and could cut herself adrift from her past, she would be in a much better position to begin her life anew. Often a woman never rises to any substantially better position than that which she occupied before her fall, because of the people who knew about her, whose presence is always a reminder of what she should live to forget; added to which there is the chance of her coming across the man who ruined her, towards whom, probably, she has still some feelings of affection. It is natural that the Colonial authorities should be anxious that the wives and mothers of their country should be good women. Nothing is more reprehensible and dishonest

than schemes, which many people countenance, of sending away to the New World those who are too lazy to work or too dissolute to be tolerated in England ; but I think it might be feasible to organize an association which would enable women, after serving a certain term of probation in this country, to emigrate with advantage to themselves and with no detriment to their new home.

There remains only one other point of interest : the probable result, successful or otherwise, of attempting to rescue women not altogether depraved or past repentance. There are few works, if any, for improving and helping the poor unfortunate in which the success or the failure of the attempt is seen so quickly. In many charitable works the results of the labour are not seen for years, or those helped drift before the work done has had time to bear fruit ; but with this work it is just the reverse. In six months, or within a year at most, it is easy to see what the result is to be. The woman is either morally stronger and better, struggling successfully with her up-hill life and making heroic efforts to repay all that has been done for her, or she is a poor spiritless creature, who will need all the help and sympathy she can get if she is not to fall back into her old life. Endeavours to raise up and improve the condition of those who, from want of training or of moral strength, cannot help themselves are not always successful ; and those who enter on the work in too sanguine a spirit are doomed to disappointment. There are times of failure, and moments of

great depression. They should not dishearten any one, but act as a spur to continued exertion, in the end to be crowned with success. It is not easy to speak with certainty as to the number of women who are rescued by, in proportion to the number who are received into, Homes. It may, however, be mentioned that in a recent year no fewer than one hundred and thirty-six women were rescued by two Homes out of one hundred and forty-eight received into them.

In these days of luxury, extravagance, and self-indulgence, women should turn for a moment from their happy life, and give a thought to their suffering and struggling sisters, many of whom have known days of luxury and pleasure, and are now groping along the dark road of expiation. The work is essentially a woman's work. It is too much fraught with risk for any man to attempt—although many men have achieved in it great results. It is for women to hold out the hand of fellowship, and lead the fallen back to a pure life. To do that successfully, they must approach the subject in a practical spirit, putting on one side the sentimental and romantic aspects of the question. One of the many objections urged against the work is that if you render the consequences of the sin less painful to a woman you diminish her dread of falling, and that the result of the efforts made to save her has been to increase the number of fallen women. As an answer to this objection, it may be stated that the workhouse returns in the parishes where those institutions are located show, by the diminished number of

their inmates, that the women have sought the Refuge or the Home in preference to the Workhouse, and that the Home has, therefore, done the desired work in rescuing them from the baneful influence of the House. No good is all good, and no evil unmixed evil ; and there will always be enthusiastic people, whose discretion exceeds their discernment, who will tell you that every woman can be rescued, and cynical people, who will impress on you that your money, time, and sympathy, are wasted, and that you are the dupe of designing and untruthful creatures, who impose on your credulity and good-nature. So it often may be ; but, for all that, the number of the women who have been rescued and restored to respectable positions in society has exceeded sanguine expectations.

It is neither desirable nor possible to enter into any particulars as to individual cases ; but there are some that stand out prominently as beacons across the dark night of human sin and suffering—characters and dispositions as fine and noble as have lived on this earth. Recalling the first moment when they came across one's path, one cannot doubt that, had no helping hand been ready to lift them up, the world would have been so much the poorer, because they would have drifted back into the abyss. To seek out and save such women is a privilege which none of us should neglect. No woman can throw herself into such work without feeling that, if her influence and example are to be the moving power, she must raise her own standard of

what a woman's life should be ; and that conviction must have an elevating influence on her character. The ultimate incentives, however, should be love of humanity, sympathy with even the most degraded, and the belief that, whilst we cannot make people perfect, we may all help to make them better than they are.



## SAVING THE INNOCENT.

To say that in a great city like London, with its millions of inhabitants, vice does not exist, is to affirm what we all know to be impossible. In considering how to cure the evil, we should approach the subject calmly, divesting ourselves of any wish to look at the sentimental or morbid side of the matter, putting aside any desire to make political or class capital out of so grievous a reproach, and devote all our thoughts and energies towards devising some way of cleansing our towns of the pollution that flows through them. A long period of anxious work among the poor fallen women of London and other places teaches two things : first, that these women are invariably untruthful ; and, secondly, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the men who led them astray are in their own position of life. We do not say "untruthful" unkindly. The life that a fallen woman leads, and the necessity of concealing her condition and the causes of it, make her resort to every device and subterfuge to prevent the truth from being discovered as long as possible ; and, having begun by deceiving

every one, the web growing closer and closer around her, she is unable to extricate herself, and so goes on to the very last moment trying to hide her shame by a story which she knows to be false from beginning to end. With still greater caution should be received the statements of women themselves hardened in vice, or the ministers of vice in others. Such persons are unscrupulous to the last degree: not, perhaps, so much from calculated wickedness as from moral decadence, the effect of a life which warps and destroys everything that is honourable in human nature. One great point that has been made in this terrible indictment is that the vices of which we speak are the vices of the upper classes, and are the result of the self-indulgence, the luxury, and the wickedness, of educated and aristocratic men. Many years' experience qualifies one to contradict that belief. Of many thousand women of whose past one knows every detail, a large proportion are precisely those who might have been corrupted by members of the wealthier classes; but one can count on one's fingers the number that even said they were ruined by "gentlemen," and with regard to the special class of which we have heard so much the same thing is true.

It is not with all that has been said and written that we wish to deal. The evil is around us in quite sad aspect enough, howsoever much we can honestly minimise it; and the question is, How can we deal with it? What are the causes which bring it about, over and above the inevitable one, that human nature

is stronger than any laws we can make to restrain and check it? Let us first look at such causes, and then try to find some practical remedy. I do not believe it possible to do much to rescue and restore to any position, in any kind of society, the lowest class of fallen women in this country. Many of them are too degraded to accept or wish for help; and the difficulty of finding any work for a woman who has led, while it lasted, a gay, reckless life, which, even on its darker side, had many things which made it varied and exciting, is almost insuperable. The dull routine of an ordinary woman's life, reached by her, as it must be, through the reformatory and the washtub, would be intolerable; and there is nothing else. She is too degraded for an ordinary home and domestic service, and she is unfit physically and for want of training. Therefore, we must leave her out of our calculations in any work that can be done practically to check the evil, finding what consolation we may in the recollection that there are many good Christian women working night after night in the streets of our large towns, and that under their tender influence some of the poor sheep may come back to the fold. We then come to the class for which a great deal can be done—that of the woman who has just fallen and is thrown on the world, deserted by the man who has deceived her and left her, with her child, in such a state of weakness and misery that she is easily reached by sympathy and kindness. This class of woman, drawn chiefly from among domestic servants, dressmakers, barmaids, and needlewomen, is

the largest, and the one with which most good can be done.

The work that is being carried on among this class is enormous. Although it is rescue work in its literal sense, it is also truly preventive; and is the only work that can ever cope with the evil, and check its growth. By "preventive" I mean saving the woman from deeper degradation, and helping her to get a fresh start in life, giving her hope, and letting her feel that she has gained personal human sympathy, to which she can appeal if temptation again assail her. It is of this woman and her child I speak. I believe that in helping her and her child we shall be doing more to reduce the evil than could be done by hysterical outcry or by legislation. It is not only, or so much, the poor mother who calls for our interest and aid, as the little waifs and strays of humanity, the child who is no one's child—no one's child to claim love and protection, and no one's child to be injured and ruined, if that should be. Few realise how largely the ranks of our criminal classes are recruited from the poor little souls who have never known mother's or father's affection, whose lives have been a curse and misfortune to them from their births, who have been neglected and ill-treated, and at last driven to stealing and the streets by the mothers, to whom they have been an incubus from the day they were born.

There are many causes which lead to a girl's ruin: some preventible. The most obvious are bad companions, love of dress and drink, and, among the

servant class, the want of care and interest that many mistresses have for their servants. Most girls among the very poorest class go to service early, about fourteen years of age; and they then begin the life of slavery of an English maid-of-all-work among the middle classes. She is a little machine out of whom as much work is to be got as can be; and when, either from bad companionship she is no longer willing to be a servant, or from overwork she is broken down in health, she is turned adrift with no thought or care for her future, and another machine is put in her place, till, perhaps, she, in her turn, shares her predecessor's fate. The middle-class mistress, although she sins in the matter of overwork, is not worse than her more wealthy sisters. She is very often a delicate, irritable woman with a large family, and a husband earning just enough to enable them to keep their heads above water, and she has probably to work as hard as her maid. The struggle for life has stifled any sympathy or thoughtfulness for others; and so the hard life of the little slave goes on, broken only by the Sunday out and the Bank Holiday—a day of supreme joy, but more fruitful of evil than almost any other in the year to our servants and the women employed in London shops. Almost every lying-in hospital or workhouse will bear me out in saying that the women who date their fall from the different holidays of the year are a very large proportion of those who go to those institutions to be confined; and the Bank holidays in this country are in this instance an un-

mixed evil as far as a certain class of young women is concerned.

The richer women in our country are just as much to blame for the little care and interest they show in their servants. Their extravagance in dress is the first bad example to a young girl, who finds at the nearest shops plenty of tawdry finery to enable her to imitate her mistress. The wastefulness of living, the want of any religious example or restraint, and the general atmosphere of indulgence, extend from the drawing-room to the servants' hall. We never think of enquiring whether our women servants are "keeping company" with respectable men, or know anything about the matter; and, while we need not measure our responsibility by them as we do our responsibility by our daughters and sisters, we stand grievously condemned for not paying more care and attention to their welfare, and especially for not enabling them to see their friends under some kind of control and supervision, instead of turning them out into the streets and parks during the long evenings they are at liberty.

Much is being done in England to guard young women engaged in business during the day from the peril of our streets at night. There are coffee-houses and clubs, with their reading-rooms and healthy amusements; there are friendly societies and guilds which, besides enrolling them on their books, take a lively personal interest in each member. Although the Girls' Friendly Society also extends its benefits to domestic

servants, the help it can give is only occasional. It is from her mistress that the girl can and ought to have a good example and help; and, as a class, the mistresses of small establishments in England have been very remiss in their duty. In the large houses in England, where there is a good housekeeper or upper servant, the same objection cannot be taken. The supervision there is generally excellent, and it is rare to find fallen girls among servants who have had situations only in houses of the highest class. Every mistress ought to consider it a duty to look after her servants: to try and check their extravagance in dress; to stop their love of the wretched, tawdry finery so many of our servants delight in; to exercise some control over their companions; and as far as possible to try and make them become teetotallers. Drink is one of the most perilous stumbling-blocks—not habitual drinking, but the occasional glass taken while out for a holiday, which in many cases leads to every evil. How often, when one has been talking to a woman of the causes which have brought her to the workhouse, and the state of destitution in which we find her, has come the answer, “I went into a public house and had a glass or two of beer, and I could not get home that night;” and you have the whole story of a ruined life. If the women of England would look on their servants as something more than machines, and realise that they are women like themselves, subject to the same weaknesses of temper and disposition, sometimes wanting rest and sympathy, and, remembering this, would try to act up to it, we should



have fewer miserable broken-down women than we have, and great deal less suffering. Servants are not perfect, or near perfection ; but, on the other hand, no more are their mistresses, and a little forbearance and patience would often save a tired, worn-out, unhappy servant from taking the first step on a downward course. There must needs be offences ; but woe to us if we leave one stone unturned to avoid causing offence.

Having pointed out some of the causes which lead to much suffering and sin in this country, I venture to suggest what, conscious of many possible objections, would, I believe, be an important step in the direction of prevention.

Many years ago, the guardians of one of the largest metropolitan workhouses gave me permission to visit the lying-in ward of the infirmary. The inmates were principally servants and dressmakers without friends in London, or any means of subsistence, deserted by the men who had ruined them, and so driven into the workhouse. They remained there till they were strong enough to work or go out, or were received into some of the many Homes existing to help such cases. They were usually seen by the House Committee before leaving, who, questioning them as to their future, were generally kind and willing to help if help were needed. Enquiries were made in each case as to the woman's knowledge of the position, and employment, and whereabouts, of the father of her child ; and if she expressed a wish to have the child affiliated the autho-

rities tried to carry it out. After a while, a girl goes to service, and the wages she (the ordinary servant who has been driven into the workhouse because she has fallen) can command vary, according to her capabilities, from £10 to £20 a year. She finds a woman more or less respectable to take charge of her baby, and she undertakes to pay out of her salary 5s. a week, or £13 a year, leaving her £2 for clothing, boots, etc. The man is never heard of again, and she starts to try and lead a new and steadier life. She may be a lucky girl: she may find a kind mistress who knows of her fall, and is willing to assist her with clothing, and will raise her wages in a few months: and she gets on fairly well, just keeping herself straight with great difficulty, while paying for her child: and as time elapses her wages are raised, and she manages to weather the storm. Eventually she marries; and her husband, if a good fellow, overlooks her fault, and lets the child share his and his children's home. This is a bright picture, but the exception; although there are many such cases. There is the other side of the picture. A poor, spiritless girl, without much strength or energy does not command even the £15 of her more fortunate sister. She gets a less good place, and does badly, changes her situation often, gets into debt, and cannot possibly keep up the payments for her child. If the woman who has the child is kind and will wait, some small sum can be paid in time; but if she presses for payment and is, as is often the case, a very poor

woman, and has taken the child to eke out her own living by the payment she gets for taking charge of it, she cannot afford to wait. The wretched mother is bound to get money somehow, and generally turns for help to some man who probably insists on his own terms in repayment; and then she drifts away again, another outcast on the streets of London. What becomes of the baby? It stays for some time with its foster-mother, who is fairly kind to it; but it has to take its chance. If it is a weakly child it lives or struggles on for a short time, against terrible odds, having every illness flesh is heir to, until at last the little neglected life goes out. Who knows but that it is best? As things now are, who can doubt that death is preferable to life for such a child? Another child will not die; and after a while, seeing no chance of being paid, its nurse insists on being rid of it, and someone else takes it for a time, and then someone else; and the story is repeated until the child is old enough to know that it belongs to no one, and is cared for by no one. It has no home, and no home ties or associations. It is a little waif on the river of life, and it floats down and is lost in the ocean of sin which engulfs so many. If the child is a boy, he often steals. He may providentially be caught in time, and sent to an industrial school, where he has a chance of beginning a new life. If a girl, she goes her way too; and that is to the bad, by a shorter but more terrible road, for there is ample proof that many of the fallen children in London are the children of

the women whose history I have described ; and worse than all is the fact that many a woman is thankful by these means to get rid of the child that has been the curse and burden of her life. There is sometimes the brighter story ; but we cannot disguise from ourselves that the fate of most of the children is one or other of these two fates—death for the weakly ones, and a living death, worse than anything we can picture to ourselves, for those that are strong enough to live.

All sentimental and humanitarian feelings on one side, it seems a serious loss to the country. Many of the children are by nature strong and vigorous, and would grow up good citizens if they had a fair chance. As long as society takes its present view, and we are afraid to recognise the fact that there is an enormous annual addition to the population of children whose existence is a reproach and a shame, children who are only to be looked on as pariahs and outcasts, so long will this massacre of the innocents continue, and we shall go on closing our eyes and ears to the evil, leaving what little is done to diminish it to charity and voluntary efforts. The time for closing our eyes has passed ; and we are bound now to face the matter bravely, and to admit that we owe a duty, as a community, to those children, by recognising their claims to our protection. Their parents cannot or will not protect them ; and, as we insist on every parent recognising his responsibility to support his legal children, and enforce that duty in the strongest way, we are bound to succour

the most helpless, for the very reason that they have no legal protection whatever.

If we insisted on a compulsory registration of all illegitimate births—in workhouses, in lying-in hospitals, and in private houses—being rigidly enforced, making the Boards of Guardians the authority to carry it out, we should then begin to know, with some certainty, the number of children with whom we have to deal ; and the first step would be taken.

We should begin by assuming that the fact of a woman being obliged to come to the workhouse for her confinement is a sufficient proof of her poverty and destitution, and that she is practically unable to pay for the support of her child on leaving. Amid such circumstances, the guardians should keep the child, and bring it up, not allowing the mother to leave the house till she has found employment, and then making an agreement with her employer that a certain portion of her earnings is to be paid to them as legal guardians of her child.

It seems at first a complete revolution of our Poor Law system ; yet, well worked, it would prove both economical and effectual. The plan of helping a woman by taking her child and making her pay in proportion to her earnings towards its support is not new. It is carried out with excellent effect by the Church of England Home for Waifs and Strays and other charities. The mother can see her child when she likes ; and, knowing that it is well cared for, she feels she is making all possible reparation for the injury she has done it, by giving her share towards its being brought

up a good and healthy man or woman. Her love is not starved or crushed out by feeling that everything she can scrape and save must go to her child, and the moral effect on the woman is excellent. The maternal instinct is quickened, and the love for her child is often a real help to her in the hour of temptation.

If such an arrangement is entered upon, one most important fact must not be lost sight of. In helping the woman by mitigating the consequences of her sin, people often forget the partner of her guilt. She alone often bears the consequences. The shame and the suffering are hers. The man escapes altogether. Such an immunity from punishment is monstrously unjust. The woman is very often to blame. Some remnant of affection—some hope that, if left alone, he may be touched by pity and marry her, or, if not, perchance help her from time to time, which he is sure not to do if she tries to affiliate the child—keeps her silent; and she bears the burden alone. Such a condition of things ought not to continue; and if the guardians of a parish, or some other responsible body, are bound to take the child, bring it up, educate it, and start it in life, with the mother's co-operation, it surely follows, as a matter of course, that they should find the father also, and make him bear his share in the matter. It is not an easy thing, for many reasons, to bring home the paternity of the child, and it is most necessary that the evidence about it should be perfectly clear; but many a man goes unpunished partly through the weakness of the woman, and partly

because, if she will not prosecute him, it is no one else's business. The same authority should be obliged to take every possible step to find the father of a child, and the same arrangement should be made with regard to his supporting the child as is made with the mother. They should both pay their share in proportion to their earnings. If a man were in good, permanent employment, he obviously should pay more than the mother out of her smaller wages. We should by those means give a strong inducement to the woman to divulge all she knew as to the situation, salary, and position, of the man, and make her at once the best detective, instead of leaving her, as she now is, very often the only person who will shield him and prevent the law from taking its course. Nothing really practical can be done to stop the evil until we make both sides realise that the same law applies to them equally, and that no means will be left untried to bring the consequences home to both.

If this system could be tried, and men and women in this country knew that there was an authority with facilities for finding out everything connected with this particular episode in their life, and that, having done so, it possessed the power of inflicting on both offenders a heavy pecuniary penalty, which would be enforced with the utmost severity, that that penalty would last over many years, and that there was no way of escape from it, we should be doing more to solve one of the greatest social problems than could be expected from any plan which has yet been devised. The



moment we take the child and protect it from the ill-usage and neglect which is sure to be its lot, and constitute it a log round the necks of its parents as long as it lives, we do two very important things. We make a man pause before he ruins a woman ; and we save many a woman from falling a second time, which she might do if the expense and responsibility of the child's life were removed.

The Poor-Law machinery which already exists could carry this out ; but it would need adapting and developing as time went on. There are the pauper schools in connection with every parish ; but one of the most important points in the new system would be that the children should not be brought up in the same schools or come under the influence of the floating pauper class of children, who come in and out of the pauper schools as their parents, for various reasons, go in and out of the workhouse. What we should aim at, besides saving the lives of the children, is proving that we can produce respectable men and women from the waifs and strays of our country. The common saying is that criminals breed criminals, and paupers, paupers ; but this is not necessarily true. If we remove children from evil influences while they are too young to remember or to deteriorate, we can bring them up to be as good and steady as the children of well-to-do respectable people. We will find in many of the industrial schools and reformatories little children who have been taken away from some of the dens of iniquity in our towns, and at the end of a few weeks have completely forgotten the

unhappy past. Very young children are not capable of retaining distinct impressions, and their natures are generally so pliable and responsive that they can be made whatever the persons who are with them wish them to be. Therefore, it is very important that, if possible, the schools and homes for those children should be kept apart from the schools for the pauper children.

The training for the boys might be carried out very much on the lines of that which is given at the Gordon Camp ; or farming on a large scale might be tried, and the boys taught to be labourers. The Society of the Church of England Home for Waifs and Strays are working a farm in Staffordshire ; and Mr. Taylor, at Sheffield, has been so employed, with his boys, for some time, very successfully. With the training ships for boys, and many similar institutions, no one can urge as an objection to this plan that it is an experiment.

The difficulties in regard to boys are small in comparison with those in regard to girls. As long as the girl continues in the school and her training is going on she is safe. A workhouse-school education is not an ideal one for a woman ; but it has the advantage of discipline, and of certain religious and softening influences, which are continuous while she remains, and induce habits of orderliness. Still, she cannot well be kept at school after she is sixteen, and it is then that the serious difficulty of her life begins. In the case of pauper children the workhouse supervision continues to be

exercised for a year or two after that age ; and this is supplemented in many cases by the efforts of the society known as the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants, which was founded by the late Mrs. Nassau Senior, whose experience as an inspector of pauper schools taught her the necessity for such an institution. Perhaps that is all that can be done in this country for the girls of the class with which I am dealing. The best and kindest thing we could do for them would be to help them to emigrate. They would be removed from any objectionable relations or influences, and have a better chance, in a new country, where nothing was known of their birth and training, than in this, where the workhouse training is a taint and a reproach. In those fresh lands they would have a surer prospect of realising our desire for their future, and of becoming happy wives and mothers.

The two objections that will be urged against this scheme are, first, the expense, and, next, the State interference in the relations betwixt a man, a woman, and their child. The expense in the first instance would, no doubt, be considerable ; but the payments enforced would nearly cover the annual outlay. Five shillings a week, which would probably be the amount paid between the parents, covers the whole expense of a child in small homes and nurseries, up to the age when by their work the children can contribute something to their own support ; and in a large institution, where children are counted by hundreds instead

of by twenties or thirties, it would cost less in proportion per head; and at a very early age a boy's work becomes remunerative. Besides, if we recognise that something should be done to save these children from crime or death, we surely should not shrink from some cost. If we only consider for a moment what we pay for a site for a school, or what we spend or can save in one item in our School Board expenditure in a year, we should not hesitate about making this effort; and we should find it a true economy in the saving that would be effected in the decrease of crime, and in one other not inconsiderable item. One of the most constant inmates of our workhouses would disappear altogether—the poor woman who has left the workhouse with her child, and tried to struggle on, battling with the world, in and out of the workhouse, as work is slack or plentiful, till at last, after sufferings and privations hardly conceivable, she gives the conflict up and comes into the house for good. The child is sent to the pauper schools; and the woman settles down to the dull despairing life of a workhouse inmate, and becomes, with her child, a permanent charge on the rates. Surely, besides what she and her child cost the rate-payers, there is something to be said in favour of making such a fate for any woman impossible. The objection as to the State interfering between the parents and the child, or, rather, standing between them so as to protect the child, appears to me to be answered by clear precedent. The Industrial School Acts remove children from the custody of their parents if either

their parents cannot control them or it is considered (from evidence given before a magistrate) that a parent or parents are teaching the children to become criminals, and also when the children are treated brutally or neglected. The father is then ordered to pay a weekly sum towards the child's support. There does not seem any fundamental difference between this and what we propose. Then, there is the advantage of taking a child away before it has had time to come into conscious contact with the infamy of its circumstances.

Were the evil of less magnitude, we would gladly leave it in a great measure to be dealt with by private benevolence ; but it has long since assumed proportions which make that out of the question, and it is growing every day. The thousands of children born annually from unmarried parents call loudly now for some recognition, and until the community accept the responsibility of seeing that the parents support the children nothing will save them. It requires personal knowledge of the sin and suffering connected with the subject to make one realise its importance. We have year after year, seen healthy children who were sent out to nurse when the mother had to go to service brought back to the home or the workhouse, at the end of only a few weeks dying of neglect with an expression of agony on their little faces that has wrung one's heart ; and there are more painful sights than the death and release of the poor little suffering soul. We see the children of these women, growing up to be the same as, and worse than, their mothers : at a

tender age driven to an evil life for want of care and control, and sometimes driven by the mother herself. The thought of such a thing is appalling. It is this knowledge, besides a great deal more than one has heart to write of, which makes us urge our authorities to take some steps to protect these children in the manner indicated. Even that will not wipe out the evil ; but it will diminish it. We cannot make people good by Act of Parliament ; but we can take means to improve them—not as a measure of sentiment or pauperisation, but in such a way as to make all men accept and realise the consequences of their actions. We are all striving for the same end, howsoever different and imperfect our means of attaining it may be. We want all our boys and girls to grow up good and honest men and women. Clear as our object is, the path to it may easily be missed ; and in the case of those unhappy little beings who owe their existence to a man's guilt and a woman's weakness two conditions are of paramount necessity : first, the supervision of the children by a proper authority, and, next, the enforcement by such authority on both parents of their responsibility.

## TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN.

The demand for a purely literary education for women is on the wane. Advocates of an intellectual as opposed to an industrial training for girls are realising that there are more women in England than can ever support themselves by teaching alone, and that other professions by which they can earn a livelihood must be found. Before the beginning of the movement for the higher education of women, the knowledge which they possessed was very elementary. A smattering of accomplishments, added to a slender acquaintance with profound subjects, was considered sufficient to fit them to be teachers or governesses. As the movement progressed, and women proved themselves capable of taking their place with men in the intellectual arena, the standard of their education was raised. All over the country, schools for girls sprang up ; colleges, founded on the same basis as those for the sterner sex, were opened ; and the honours won by women in the examinations justified high expectations.

It soon became evident that the revival in education could not be confined to those women whose mental



qualifications raised them pre-eminently above their sisters. All wished to participate in the advantages that the new system introduced. The opening of large day schools for girls in London, and in all great towns, at which tuition of the most approved kind was given, created a change among the middle classes which almost revolutionized the state of affairs. Instead of being taught by a governess at home, the daughters of a house were sent to a high school for the day. In this way, girls were much better educated, teaching in classes developing a spirit of emulation which spurred them to greater efforts.

A very few years showed the effect of the change. The women who enjoyed the advantages of the first impetus given by the new system soon reaped their reward. The passing of the Education Act, with the multiplication of schools and the demand for teachers, afforded them unexpected opportunities of employment, and the large salaries they received repaid the time and money they had spent in educating themselves.

Still, even as man cannot live by bread alone, all women cannot live by teaching. The movement, which had accomplished a great work and opened up lives of intellectual activity to many women, pressed cruelly on others who earned, by teaching, small but certain incomes. Families depending on the earnings of a widowed mother or sister gradually found, with the educational changes of the day, their means of subsistence failing them. There are few sadder stories than those of the struggles of ladies who strove to live

by teaching. Nevertheless, the reform had a brighter aspect.

Bitter experience, having shown women that they should no longer consider teaching the only vocation which a lady could follow without losing position, also incited them to discover some means by which they could redress the evil ; and the fact that living by teaching had become more difficult was recognized by even the warmest advocates of the higher education of women.

Theoretically, every child in England is taught something that will enable him or her to earn a living ; but the training has hitherto been purely intellectual. Children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and whatever other subjects of a like nature they have capacity to acquire. Education of a technical nature, to train them in some industrial knowledge and enable them to learn the elements of work of which they could make a profession, has been neglected. The separation of technical and elementary education has been a great misfortune. Owing to the poverty of parents in many cases, and to their cupidity in others, children are removed from school as soon as they have passed the standard which the law enforces, and are put to work, their earnings adding to the income of the family. The education they have received is narrowly limited. They have mastered the Three R's to so small an extent that the schooling is of no real value.

The technical education of girls is of quite as much

importance as that of boys ; and, unfortunately, among the very poor classes, especially in large towns, many of the mothers are absolutely incapable of imparting the ordinary domestic knowledge necessary to every woman, which accounts for the dirt, improvidence, and waste, of so many households.

Thus we find that, with no training at home, many married women have lost whatever traditionary housewifery their mothers may have had, and can neither cook nor sew. The food of the household is unsavoury and extravagant, and the whole *ménage* has an untidiness and discomfort that drives the husband to the public-house. For girls of this class there is needed some training in the very elements of housewifery, while for all women a much more general knowledge of household matters is needed.

The cause of those failures is not obscure. It is want of training. Some women are by nature unthrifty and untidy, and no training would have much effect on them ; but those are a small section, and are confined more especially to the lower classes. Englishwomen (generally speaking) are orderly in domestic matters, in spite of the want of method which is one of the defects of the present system of education. Many of the difficulties would be surmounted were it the custom in England to instruct every girl, whether rich or poor, in some elementary knowledge of domestic and industrial subjects. All professional work calls for a mastery of minute details, and in no occupation is such complete knowledge of more importance than it

is in that of the mistress of a household. In other countries, the importance of educating girls in subjects by which they can earn their livelihood, otherwise than by teaching, is recognized ; and it will be interesting to inquire into the scope and direction of such instruction.

The Royal Commission on Technical Education made the question of technical education for women part of their inquiry, and in nearly every other country they visited found schools established in the large towns for training girls in various industries. In all of them the girls are taught embroidery, plain needlework, and dressmaking. The technical teaching varies in most countries ; but drawing is everywhere taught, and is the basis of instruction. The schools are intended for the daughters of small shopkeepers and of artisans, and in most of them the primary education and the technical instruction are supplemented by instruction in one foreign language. The pupils devote their morning hours to ordinary school subjects, and their afternoons to the learning of a trade. The character of the special teaching depends mainly on the social habits and the resources of a country. While needlework and dressmaking form the principal subjects in all schools, book-keeping, the elements of law, and commercial correspondence, are largely taught in France, where young women are employed as clerks and accountants more numerous than in other countries. In Germany and in Austria, where domestic industries employ women, the instruction is almost entirely in plain sewing, embroidery, dressmaking,

cooking, house-keeping, and laundry work. In Holland, in Belgium, and in Italy, the range of subjects is wider, and embraces lace-making, flower-making, designing, painting on porcelain and glass, telegraphy, and pharmacy.

In Paris, the *Ecole Professionnelle Menagère* teaches girls on leaving the primary schools some useful trade and household work. For the house-keeping and the professional classes girls must be over 12 and under 15, and must hold a certificate of primary instruction. The school is under the direction of a mistress and a staff of teachers for needle-work, lace-making, embroidery, flower-making, and stay-making, cutting out and making up dresses, cooking, and laundry work; and when the work is of such a nature as can be used the pupils receive premiums. The next in demand of the trades taught is ordinary dressmaking for the working classes; and after that come millinery and laundrywork. All the girls take their turn at household work, including cooking. This school, which is being developed by the municipality of Paris, is situated in a quarter inhabited by the working classes, by whom it is appreciated.

The *Elise Lemoine* schools, in Paris, for the professional instruction of women, are four, and have about 500 pupils. They are managed by a committee, and depend largely on voluntary subscriptions, which are, however, augmented by grants of about £1,280 from the Government and the City of Paris. The annual expenditure amounts to £5,000 a year, which is

provided for by fancy sales and subscriptions, over and above the Government subsidy. The teaching is intended to prepare girls for commercial life, and the course extends over three years. A sound elementary education in the ordinary branches is given, and there are six special classes. A commercial class includes book-keeping, English, industrial drawing, dressmaking, wood-engraving, painting on pottery or on porcelain, and painting on glass. The school fees amount to 12 francs a month, and are payable in advance. The schools were founded under the presidency of Madame Elise Lemoigne in 1856, and have been most successful. The Society which now manages them was incorporated in 1870, and is under the control of a committee. The *Ecole Commerciale pour les Jeunes Filles* is a middle-class girls' school, and has a subvention from the Government. It aims at giving girls a knowledge of some trade or business and a good general education.

The *Ecole Professionnelle Communale des Jeunes Filles*, at Rouen, qualifies girls to become wives for men of the working classes. On one floor there is a laundry; on another dressmaking and embroidery are the subjects. The first year, the pupils learn plain sewing; the second year, cutting out and making dresses. The school is a day school, and the instruction is gratuitous. The *Martinere* school, at Lyons, is on the same system; but it is a superior primary and professional school. The course of study is for three years, and embraces mathematics and the higher

branches of learning, which is obligatory on all pupils. The special instruction is given in three divisions—commercial knowledge, industrial drawing, dressmaking, and fine needlework;—the girls choosing.

Very successful schools, founded on the model of Dr. Von Steinbeis's *Frauenarbeitsschule*, at Deutlingen, have sprung up in Germany. In many places, girls of the wealthy classes attend them as finishing schools, at which they may acquire a knowledge of house-keeping and domestic economy. The school at Deutlingen, founded in 1868, was the first of its kind. It occupies a fine building, and has a museum, at the top of the house, illustrating the kinds of work done in the school. Dressmaking is well taught, and many of the girls go to the school for a year to complete their education in housewifery. It serves as a training school for teachers of needlework. Drawing is well taught, and is the foundation of the different kinds of work. Ironing and clear starching, machine sewing, and pleating, also are taught. The students are about 300, and the fees are £8 a year. The *Frauenarbeitsschule*, at Munich, is founded on the same model; but the school is not a State school. It is supported by voluntary contributions and a small grant from the town. It is not exclusively an industrial school in which women are trained to earn their living. Many women attend to learn needlework for domestic purposes only, and there is a special department for teaching school-mistresses. The pupils are taught



drawing, freehand, linear, and perspective, and designing for embroidery. The fees for ordinary pupils are 36s. a year, and for mistresses, 72s.

The Commercial and Industrial School for grown-up daughters, in Berlin, is to afford to young women belonging to the upper and the middle classes such knowledge as shall enable them to become efficient book-keepers, accountants, and correspondents. The course of study, which is of an intellectual kind, comprises one branch of eminently practical knowledge: that which treats of domestic economy in its smallest detail—sustentation, preservation of food, cooking, nursing the sick, sanitary laws, management of servant, and accounts.

In North Germany, with an agricultural population, there are schools at which farming in all its branches is taught. The oldest agricultural school in Germany of which there is any record was founded, about 1722, by King Frederick William I., at Könighorst, in Brandenburg. That locality was selected because the King had purchased many East Freisland cows, and found, as a tenant, a good maker of butter and cheese in the Dutch fashion. Könighorst was converted into a dairy school, to which the leading people in the cattle-breeding parts of the Empire could send farmers' daughters, for whose good conduct they would be responsible, to be taught dairying. The girls worked as ordinary dairy-maids for two years, and before they left were bound to make butter without help. Sometimes the King himself was judge of the

butter ; and if it passed muster the successful dairy-maid received from the Royal purse 100 marks as a wedding present. The King maintained the school till his death, and the good results of its training were long acknowledged ; but at the beginning of the present century it ceased for want of pupils. However, the Royal Academies of Agriculture all over Germany carry on the work.

One of the most well-known dairy-schools in Germany is at Heinrichsthal, near Radeberg, in Saxony ; another at Gross-Hinstedt, near Hildesheim. In the former, the management of a dairy, book-keeping, the management of cows, fattening calves and pigs, cooking, house-keeping, poultry, and the management of the kitchen garden, are the subjects. The Royal Agricultural Society of Hanover gives a subvention on consideration of six pupils being taken for a year, to be taught and boarded and lodged for £18.

Among the cottage industries in Germany, some instruction is given in straw-plaiting. At Schonach, in the Black Forest, straw-plaiting is taught in special schools ; also it is taught at Furtwangen, where schools have been established by the Government to promote the industry. At Lahr, near Freiburg, a trade in small card-board boxes for chemists and confectioners is carried on, and is taught. It is hardly under Government protection ; but there are specialists in each district or village who impart instruction and hold classes for teaching the different subjects.

In Austria, the Royal State School for Art Embroi-

dery, at Vienna (Fachschule für Kunststickerei), is a State school for training teachers. There are from seventy to eighty pupils, and the course extends over five years. The education is free, and there are bursaries which enable the poorer girls to live while learning their trade. All the girls are over fourteen, and must have completed their education at a primary school. They must be able to draw, and have a knowledge of plain needlework. All the pupils are taught freehand drawing, and the students make designs for needlework, and trace them on the material ; designing and needlework are taught. Foreigners pay £25 a year for the complete course, and students for lectures are taken at £2 10s. for the half-year. There is a school very much on the same plan at Berlin.

The schools formed by the Austrian Government for technical instruction may be divided into two classes—those in which a sound theoretical education is imparted, with a certain period of hours daily in the workshop for practical tasks ; and those where the greater part of the time is spent in the shop, and the theoretical work consists mainly of drawing. At Cortina D'Ampezzo, in the Tyrol, there is a large school for teaching inlaying and intarsia work ; and in the filigree school, attached to it, women and girls are taught in great numbers. The school was an interesting indication of the desire of the Austrian Government to assist and develop local effort in the matter of workshop instruction. In Belgium there are schools not differing much from many of those already described : “Ecoles

professionnelles pour les jeunes filles." One is of lower grade than the other. The basis of teaching is drawing, which underlies all the trade work which the pupils are taught. The teaching comprises a general course, obligatory on all, while there are special courses in preparation for trades. The trade course comprises book-keeping, arithmetic applied to commercial occupations, English and German business correspondence, dressmaking, embroidery, and so on. The school is a day school, and the pupils who do not enter with bursaries pay £2 8s. a year, half the cost; the remainder is defrayed by donations, the sale of work done in the school, and the subsidies of the State; sometimes the subsidies are as much as £1,648. One of the principal trades taught is that of flower-making. The work is done in separate divisions, each representing a year's learning. The first year the pupils have to make petals of all kinds; the second year, buds; in the third year, complete flowers, for which prizes are awarded. Technical painting, such as painting on china, glass, silk, for decorative purposes, designs for lace, and lace-making to a certain extent, are taught. Most of the lace made in Belgium, however, comes from the convent schools. There are six such schools in Belgium. Those at Antwerp and Liège are the best.

In the sister country of Holland, at Amsterdam, there is a girls' industrial school (*Industrie School voor Vrouwelijke Jeugd*), under the direction of a committee. The qualification is the primary-school certificate. The

designs of the school, now that it has entered into its new building, are to train teachers for infant schools ; to prepare candidates for the Government examinations in drawing, needlework, and the dispensing of drugs ; and to teach art in its industrial applications, such as leather-work, flower-making, wood-carving, and lace-making. The course extends over three years. The school contains nearly 200 pupils, thirty of the first year, fifty-five of the second, and the remainder of the third year ; and the hours of instruction are thirty-four a week. The school expenses amount to about £1,300 a year, part of which is met by the Government subsidy of £375, subscriptions, and the fees, which, with the sale of work, produce about £453 a year. Although Holland may be classed as one of the countries in Europe where agriculture is largely taught and developed among men, there is no technical instruction to women in dairy work.

In Denmark, £11,000 a year is granted by Government for agricultural education. The system carried out at the two agricultural schools, the Folkeskole and the Landboskole, is unique. The Landboskoles, or agricultural schools, of which there are ten, are worked in conjunction with the Folkehoiskoles, superior elementary schools, of which there are sixty. The Landboskole singled out by the Royal Commission on Technical Education as the best example is the one at Tune. Every large farm in Denmark is in reality a school of dairying for farmers' daughters. As a rule, there are not more than three or four dairy pupils at a time ; but

the Commissioners specially report on a farm of 170 acres, kept by Mrs. Hannah Neilson, who "has about a dozen farmers' daughters as working pupils, who are boarded and lodged in the house, remaining for various periods, from six weeks to two years. The pupils who remain only a short time pay a considerable amount relatively for their instruction ; but they all work as hard as an ordinary dairy-maid. Most of them are the daughters of peasant farmers, keeping from ten to fifteen cows ; but some have larger farms. One girl, whose father kept forty cows, was about to be married, and under Mrs. Neilson was learning how to turn the dairy of her future home to the best account. Each pupil has five cows allotted to her in rotation ; and the results of the several milkings are carefully noted, the produce of each cow being entered separately, morning and evening, with the name of the milker. Thus Mrs. Neilson has a practical means of knowing whether the pupils can perform satisfactorily one of the most important, as it is one of the most fundamental and most neglected, operations connected with dairy farming." This one fact connected with the teaching of dairying in Denmark illustrates how carefully the system is carried out.

At Milan, where the only technical instruction to women in Italy is given at the Scoula Professionale Femminihile, the course of instruction is somewhat different. The Government subsidizes it, and the pupils, who are about 150, pay a small fee monthly. Dress-making, flower-making, embroidery, china-painting,



typography, and machine sewing, are taught; and the special instruction is in telegraphy, chemistry, and the elements of electricity. The telegraphic systems of Morse and Hughes are taught; and the pupils, before being employed in the telegraphic departments, are sent to an office for further practice. Drawing also is taught. The instruction is excellent.

At St. Petersburg, in the girls' department at the Handicraft and Industrial Schools, besides receiving the usual elementary education, the pupils are taught cutting-out, needlework, dressmaking, millinery, house-keeping, and cooking; and the girls of the highest class undertake, in turns, the management of the household. The girls pay £15 a year for full residence; semi-boarders, £6; and daily scholars, £3.

It will be seen that on the Continent technical education for women is thoroughly practical. It enables young women to find suitable and remunerative employment, which, if not sufficient to maintain them without their leaving home, enables them to supplement the family income.

While there are in England many small charitable homes and institutions for training girls and children in industrial work, no definite effort has been made by Government to supplement primary instruction by industrial or technical training. There are, however, several institutions initiated by private enterprise. The People's Palace, in the Mile End Road, and the new Polytechnic, in the South and South-East of London, are the most important. The nightly classes



for girls and women are largely attended, and the instruction in the various subjects is appreciated. Needlework, dressmaking, millinery, and cooking, are taught. The hours are from 7 till 9.30 p.m., and the fees vary from 5s to 7s. 6d. a quarter. Lectures on housewifery deal with the minutest details; and an elementary class for reading, writing, and arithmetic, is held at the same place and time. Perhaps the most successful attempt on a large scale to combine technical and primary education has been carried out at the Polytechnic, in Regent Street, where, under the guidance and management of Mr. Quintain Hogg, there is a school that has largely influenced the careers of thousands of young men and women. The work has been voluntary, and its results speak more eloquently of the success of the undertaking than any description that could be written. Affiliated to the Polytechnic is the Young Women's Christian Institute, the members of which attend evening classes for technical instruction. There is a large day-school for children of the middle classes, at which, besides the usual elements of primary education, instruction in dressmaking, needlework, cookery, and so on, is given; while at the evening classes for young women engaged during the day there is instruction in the same subjects, as well as in shorthand, book-keeping, commercial correspondence, and the knowledge necessary for Civil Service women clerks, such as clerks, letter sorters, and telegraph learners. The fees vary from 2s. to 6s. in the simple subjects, and from 8s. to 12s. in the more advanced; and, under the head of

housewifery, a certain knowledge of sick-nursing and management of children is imparted.

In England technical teaching is most important, not only among the working classes but among the well-to-do. Many gentlewomen are poor ; and the boon to them of finding some place where they can be taught how to make their own hats and bonnets, and re-trim and re-arrange their dresses, is great. The allowance of many an unmarried girl in society is miserably inadequate. Unless it is supplemented by presents, she has a perpetual struggle to make both ends meet. The guinea paid for the millinery she learns is more than replaced by the skill she acquires in making up her own things. Then, this teaching, applied to the more serious difficulties that so often beset the young and ignorant wife at the beginning of her married life, would save many a home from extravagance and unhappiness. The Birmingham Ladies' Association for Useful Work has brought some knowledge into the lives of women of the working classes in that town by means of lectures ; but, whilst every influence that can be used to improve their homes is desirable, that which comes when habits and conditions of life have become confirmed cannot have the same beneficial effect.

The only part of the United Kingdom where any State recognition or assistance is given to technical education, other than the grants made for needlework in schools, is Ireland, where there have been attempts to stimulate local industries. The first was in 1838,

when the Commissioners of the National Education Board recognised the utility of giving the people instruction in agriculture. Their first effort was the establishment of a school at Glasnevin, near Dublin, where they took a farm and pupils. The Devon Commissioners in 1843 warmly encouraged the idea, and it was thoroughly supported by public opinion everywhere. As early, however, as 1848, the House of Commons began to cavil at the expenditure, and the Select Committee on Miscellaneous Expenditure expressed grave doubts as to the wisdom of grafting agricultural on primary education. The Commissioners strongly urged the Government to continue the effort. They expected great advantages from the system of agricultural instruction which they had conceived for the country; in which opinion they were warmly seconded by Lord Clarendon, the Lord Lieutenant. The famine in Ireland for some years paralyzed all efforts to improve the agricultural condition of the country. The schools flourished, however, in spite of it; but public opinion in Parliament was changing, and the Commission on Primary Education, under Lord Powis, recommended that the number of agricultural schools should be reduced. Steps were accordingly taken to let the farms; which was done with all, excepting the Albert Institution at Glasnevin and the Munster Farm at Cork. The Cork case is very interesting. While the Commissioners were actually engaged in getting rid of it, a movement to revive the butter trade and make the Munster Farm the means of resuscitating it was set on

foot in Cork. A strong representation to the Treasury, asking them to consider their decision as to closing the Munster School, was made by the Commissioners, and the appeal gained the sanction of the Treasury. The Local Committee, in augmentation of the Treasury grant, subscribed in the first year £526; and the experiment has been thoroughly successful.

The young women trained in the dairy school are chiefly daughters of Munster farmers. They pay for six weeks' training only £3; but at the annual examinations scholarships or free places are awarded to the three best competitors. Mr. Forest, the head inspector for the butter market, reported improvement in the quality of the butter, and attributed it entirely to the training at school. The ladies' committee give great assistance in superintending the classes for cooking and needlework, and at the butter-making contest in Manchester one of the pupils of the school obtained first prize.

In 1883 the Government made a grant of £2,000 to the school, to be expended in agricultural education. Mr. Carroll, the inspector, reports that they "are constantly receiving letters from noblemen, gentlemen, and extensive farmers, asking us to send them dairy-maids who have been instructed in their school, thus opening up a livelihood to a large class of girls."

What has been done in England to aid the industrial education of women is very small when compared with what is done abroad; and, contrasted with the advantages following from technical instruction in America, it

is not worth considering. The necessity for such training is becoming every day more apparent ; and it is a pity that some larger organization, into which the smaller ones might be merged, so as to make the undertaking assume more of a national character, is not created. It is in a National Technical Training College, combining the teaching of trade with that of agricultural knowledge, that the experiment should be tried. For that purpose a large building near London, where instruction in farming and gardening could be imparted, would be indispensable.

Many people have advocated turning the Alexandra Palace, at Muswell Hill, into such a school. It has never paid, nor is there much probability of its ever being successful, as a place of amusement ; and for the kind of instruction given at a training college it possesses many qualifications. It has sufficient land adjoining to fulfil the agricultural requirements of such a scheme ; it is near enough London to enable women who desire to take up certain subjects only to go as day pupils, and it is large enough to provide accommodation for many classes. Part of the building might be used as a boarding-house for women who wished to remain for two or three years' training in domestic, agricultural, and horticultural, matters. One part of the scheme deserves special mention—the proposal that Boards of Guardians should have power, after girls have passed the fourth standard, or attained the age of twelve or thirteen, to transfer them to the training college, and thus finish their education by a course of technical in-

struction. It is technical knowledge in daily life that women require. They learn certain subjects more or less thoroughly in classes; but they get no general knowledge of the details of the work they have to undertake. That can only be acquired by daily experience. To girls from parish or pauper schools such a training would be invaluable. No one is less fitted to be a good servant, or a useful wife, than a girl brought up at a workhouse school, where all individuality is crushed out, and every child is treated, trained, and turned out, alike, with utter disregard of any peculiarity of temper, or of character, or of capacity.

Women of the better classes might be received as boarders, taking up what subjects they desired; and by having the two classes of women together in the same building the lower class of girls could learn the duties of domestic servants, undertaking the work of the college, and acting as servants to the better-class boarders, who would pay in proportion a much larger fee for instruction. The scheme is large. It would require assistance other than the income which the college might earn. Properly managed, however, it should succeed. A large dairy school might be added, for the land and grounds are the best dairy land in England; also horticulture, floriculture, natural history (entomology especially with reference to those two subjects), drawing and designing, mechanical subjects, laundry work on a large scale, carpentering, house painting, rearing poultry, management of pigs—in

short, all the subjects pertaining to domestic and farm life—might be studied practically. The advantage of a national training college would be assured. The teaching imparted would be thorough and practical, and the strictest tests would be applied. At present much of the knowledge women possess on those subjects is superficial, as they are too often satisfied with elementary knowledge, and think when that is attained that they are qualified to command the highest salaries. Were such a national school formed, the certificate of the college would be a guarantee of the competence of its holder to be a teacher.\* Women's work must be considered when we are dealing with the industrial education of the country. It is by industrial rather than by intellectual employment that the majority of women in England must in future earn their living.



## THE HOMES OF THE POOR.

In his evidence before the Royal Commission on the housing of the poor, Lord Shaftesbury expressed the opinion that, howsoever much their condition had improved in other respects, "over-crowding had become more serious than it ever was." That statement was amply borne out in evidence by others competent to speak. The state of affairs could not be otherwise. In London, where rent is much higher than in the provinces, the relation of wages to rent is very much out of proportion. The poor must have a roof over their heads, and that roof must be paid for. The result is that in every other necessary of life they stint themselves in order to pay the rent. In most of the wretched and horrible dwellings, where the squalor is indescribable, the rent-book is well paid up. The bareness of the room, the famished faces of the people, and their scanty clothing, are evidence that, although most of their clothes are at the pawn-shop, and they have no regular food, they have never escaped from the phantom of the rent-collector. Bad as was the condition of many

of the houses inhabited by the poorer classes in London, a state of things in many cases no better still exists. Public attention is always being directed to certain localities in the East of London, and careful inquiry has disclosed evils which are a disgrace to civilization. The employment afforded by the docks and the various manufactories of the East of London has drawn thither a large and wretchedly poor class ; and over-population, which has brought down wages, has sent up rents.

The earnings of many of the poor are, at the best, starvation wages. The people are surrounded by influences under which the moral sense is blunted. They become listless, despairing, reckless, debilitated physically, and ruined morally. As a nation we have grievously sinned in our duty to those who are too busy, too down-trodden, to resist, and even ignorant of the laws designed for their protection. Nothing has been more curious, in proceedings before the magistrates to enforce the closing of dwellings, than to find the complete ignorance of the poor as to the protection which the law affords them. It is with great difficulty they are persuaded that if they put the law in force it could not be used against themselves, and that there was no danger of their landlords punishing them for proclaiming the unsanitary state of the houses in which they were forced to live. After one or two cases had been heard, and dealt with, the difficulties experienced in getting the tenants to move disappeared to some extent. It was not so much from fear of the conse-

quences to themselves, as from the impossibility of sparing the time which was necessary to put the law into force, that they were indifferent. They could not afford the time. Passing hours waiting at a police-court meant the loss of money to them, and very often they had difficulties put in their way by officials. Until quite recently it was always understood that only the tenants themselves could put the law in action. As a matter of fact, it is open to anyone to move, and this can be done without waiting for the sanction of the local authority. The buildings closed by a magistrate's order in Ann's Court and Newling Street, Bethnal Green, were condemned on the application of an outsider ; and a district visitor, or any one interested in the housing of the poor, can, by bringing about the infliction of fines, or (in very bad cases) by closing the premises altogether, put an end to the evil of unwholesome or badly-constructed dwellings.

The regions of overcrowding and insanitary dwellings are numerous ; but the district embracing Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, all Whitechapel, St. George's in the East, Shadwell, and Ratcliff, with Mile End, is the worst. Space and air are worth any money, and the only open spaces are old burial grounds or back-yards. Every other inch is covered by miserable houses, except where huge warehouses rear their heads, shutting out both air and light. Limehouse and Poplar are in the same condition. It is easy to trace the process by which the overcrowding has been brought about. The

original buildings are still standing, and in the gardens behind them small cottages were built. Houses of two or three rooms are found, some set back to back, or built against a wall, with a narrow footway and a path running down the middle. Small courts which once were open spaces have been built over; and an arched doorway, taken out of one of the rooms of the house facing the street, makes the entrance.

Another common way of filling up is the building of workshops, which do not need any approach, or are let with the houses facing the street. The workshops do not necessarily involve more overcrowding; but in every case they obstruct light and air. Bad as the building of small cottage property or small workshops may be, the solid backward growth of the buildings which face the streets, for whatever purpose, whether as common lodging-houses or as tenements, is worse; for in many parts this ends in houses reaching back to houses, and forming means of communication through and through. Some houses recently closed in Ann's Place, Bethnal Green, were a good example of what dwellings built on a small open space become. The court had evidently not long ago been a small garden, round which on every side high dwellings had arisen; and at last, when every possible means of procuring air had been closed, the small tenements designated by the name of "model" were erected. On three sides the court was overshadowed by high houses; and on one side there was a large factory with a high wall, several feet above the tops of the houses in the court, which

faced the back wall of the houses on that side. There was no air ; the floors were full of rat holes ; the walls were running down with damp ; the sanitary arrangements were out of order ; there was no regular supply of water in the closets. In this model dwelling there were twenty houses containing about thirty families, paying on an average four shillings a week per room.

The history of Ann's Place is a good example of how such property continues to be tolerated. The houses in question belonged to a building company, and were taken by them in discharge of a bad debt. They had been built about forty years. A few years ago their condition was brought to the attention of the Vestry, which ordered them to be closed. The owners, on appeal to the justices, had the order rescinded, on condition that a certain amount of money should be spent on the property. The medical officer of the parish of Shoreditch attended in court, and stated that no amount of money would make the dwellings fit for human habitation. The Vestry had during the Spring decided to close them ; but their intention was frustrated by persons whom the owners and the Vestry considered to be interfering outside their province.

In Newling Street, Bethnal Green, where many houses were closed under a magistrate's order, the state of the dwellings was disgraceful beyond words. The houses, which were low, consisted of two rooms, one above another ; and in the top room the flooring was so rotten as to be unsafe. The light shone between the boards which formed the back wall of the kitchen ;

there was no flooring to any room ; and drainage there was none. At the back of the houses was a long narrow strip of ground on which were still standing the ruins of about eight closets ; close by were the pumps from which the drinking and washing water (when there was any supply) was procured by the inhabitants. The spectacle of that backyard was one never to be forgotten. The dirt and dilapidation, the smell and the squalor, were indescribable ; and the ruined closets without doors, many without walls, proclaimed the utter absence of any sense of decency or of cleanliness. It turned out on enquiry that the agent of the owner was the son of a vestryman. Notices to quit had been served on the tenants ; but they were informal, having no legal attestation ; and the tenants were told that if they paid their arrears they might burn the notices. The agent of the former owner, in spite of having given notice to quit to all on the property, owing to its having passed into other hands, continued to allow the tenants to remain, and quietly collected the rents ; and it was only when the application for closing the premises came up before the magistrate that those facts came out. The agent had to endure a good deal of abuse and rough usage from the poor tenants who crowded the court to hear the decision, and the police had to interfere in order to see him safely away—so violent were their demands to have the money they had paid him refunded.

One of the troubles with which the poor have to contend in regard to their dwellings, where they wish

to enforce sanitary necessities, is the fact, not generally known, that many of them have the greatest difficulty in ascertaining who their landlords really are. Their rent-books contain only the names of the tenants, the amounts and the dates of payments, and the initials of the rent-collector. They can, therefore, only ascertain by chance to whom their houses belong. The collectors are often merely agents' clerks. Sometimes the persons for whom the collectors act are only farmers of the rents ; and they not only bully the tenants, but often take the law into their own hands, and turn the people into the streets without legal warrant of any kind. It should be made imperative that every rent-book contained the full name and address of the owner of the property.

The East and South of London undoubtedly contain the largest number of unsanitary dwellings. The people are poorer ; their existence is a greater struggle ; they are ignorant of any rights they possess ; and they have not time to inquire into their position. Southwark, Bermondsey, Hackney, Clerkenwell, and Haggerston, all share the same unenviable conditions ; but on the north side of the river the worst may certainly, outside the distinctly East-end part of London, be found in Clerkenwell, including Holborn and Hoxton. Some of the worst dwellings in London are to be found in Hoxton Market. Rooms of about 10ft. square fetch 2s. 6d. or 3s. a week. The extreme examples, however, are externally better-class houses. In Clerkenwell and in Holborn, where the houses are larger and apparently



better-built, careful inspection proves that nothing in the worst slum of Bethnal Green or of Whitechapel approaches the dirt, bad drainage, and overcrowding, that prevailed unsuspected and unheeded. Only since the question of the housing of the poor has become a burning one have some houses in St. Luke's parish been condemned as unfit for human habitation. At the back of Lever Street, off the City Road, there have, for many years, been small courts, passages, and buildings of various kinds, with workshops and manufactories that have grown up as just described. Slowly the houses have been pulled down, as their rickety condition made the thought of repairs hopeless. Some of them were fever dens, and most of them the homes of thieves and women of low character ; and now only a few are left, which are being emptied as the people who live in them find better lodgings. Pound's Passage, one of the places I refer to, where for some years I was a visitor, was one of the worst. The passage was little over 3ft. wide, and had no outlet at one end. The houses were two storeys high ; and on the opposite wall rose the back of a workshop, which was higher than the houses, and shut out all light and air. A poor cripple and his wife and children lived in one house ; and, as he could not go to the higher rooms, he was forced to live in the kitchen. His room was dark. What light he got was reflected from the wall opposite, which was white-washed from time to time as the landlord saw fit. The houses were built up at the back, and there was no ventilation. Day after day, when

he was unable to be wheeled to the corner of the street, he sat at his window vainly trying to do a little work by the miserable light that reached him, at last hopelessly giving it up; and for these miserable rooms he paid 5s. a week. The children in the court were thin, rickety, always ailing, from the want of air and light; and the sanitary arrangements were elementary.

In Clerkenwell, the houses about Leather Lane and Hatton Garden are indescribably wretched. One house in Greville Street, Leather Lane, of twelve rooms, contains as many families. The cellar there was a fair specimen of houses in the locality. The moment the door was opened the effluvia from the bad drainage was sickening; and the dark staircase to the wretched kitchen, with its walls running down with damp and its floor full of rat holes, was not one bit more dilapidated than anything else in the wretched dwelling. The cellar window was four inches below the level of the street. The old couple who lived there paid 4s. 6d. a week. Hardly anywhere is there such dirt and misery as among the "Italian community" of London, in Hatton Garden. The local authorities cannot be ignorant of the fact, which is well-known to the police, that in these houses men, women, children, and monkeys, all herd and sleep together in the same room. They have no beds; and so they sleep on the floor, never taking off their clothes. From those dens of disease come all the vendors of cream ices that we see in the streets, as well as those who sell sweetstuffs, gingerbread, and other food. All the things used in their business—milk, eggs, water,

spices—are kept in these fetid rooms, and become impregnated with the germs of disease.

In Marylebone, the Lisson Grove district was at one time as bad as any East-end slum ; and in the North, towards Highgate and Camden Town, there are streets containing many unsanitary dwellings ; while in St. Pancras we have streets and courts which bear comparison with the worst parts of Bethnal Green and Whitechapel. Their proximity to the better part of London is slowly improving them ; and London is not so much built out on that side, nor is there any barrier countrywards such as the river presents eastwards. The want of the East-end has aroused the interest of a very large and charitable body to such an extent, it is a common saying that the East-end does not need help so much as many parts nearer home ; but let people judge for themselves. Let them go some day, starting from Bishopsgate Street, and, working their way towards Commercial Street, Whitechapel, see whether in their wildest dreams they have imagined such poverty and wretchedness possible. Taking Great Nichol Street as a specimen of the typical East-end home, let them go into one house after another. They will find that in the eight rooms of each house there are eight families, that the average rent of a room is 3s. 2d. a week, and that for this rent, people live in a room in the garrets, 9 feet by 7 feet with a 7-feet-6-inch ceiling. In front rooms the space is 11 feet by 8 feet, with a 7-feet-6-inch ceiling ; the back rooms are mere slips of rooms about 8 feet long and about 6 feet wide ; and the

rent for these is 2s. 6d. a week. If they were watertight and warm, the people would not complain ; but in nearly all the top rooms the rain comes through the roof, wetting and ruining their poor clothes and bedding. New Nichol Street, Half Nichol Street, Gossett Street, Castle Street, Chambord Street, Mead Street, Turville Street and Buildings, Virginia Row, and so on, are in precisely the same condition. The misery of the dwellings is in glaring contrast to the rents, and there is nothing but a Board School or a Church to vary the monotony of the dilapidated houses and streets. Whitechapel and Stepney are in much the same plight. Farther, towards Poplar and East India Road, the same evidence of poverty and neglect meets the eye. The only remedy seems a clean sweep of the whole place. In some parts there are a few evidences that the local authorities, influenced by the Press, are urging landlords to do something towards improving the condition of their slum properties, and bricklayer and whitewasher have been set to work to put a better face on things ; but the improvement is only partial and temporary. An internal inspection would soon prove that the condition of the houses is as unsanitary and bad as it was before any attempt was made to clean them. Not one of them provides the amount of air and space which should be insisted on ; nor do they possess any of the conveniences necessary to ensure health and cleanliness.

The buildings hitherto erected for the working classes in London have not benefited those of whom

we are speaking, except in so far as they have relieved the pressure by providing superior dwellings for the class of artisans earning from 25s. to 30s. a week. Indeed, in some ways they have tended to aggravate the evil condition of the houses of the poorest. When bad houses are pulled down to be supplemented by industrial dwellings, the tendency is for the people to crowd into the small and wretched streets in the immediate vicinity, and remain there instead of occupying the new tenements, which, as soon as built, are let to a class better than those who were turned out, people who can afford to pay the rent, and to take more rooms to house their family. Some dwellings make provision for costermongers, and find standing room for barrows and carts ; but for a long time it was impossible for a costermonger to live in an industrial dwelling, because there was no provision of this kind, while in his former house, if he was the fortunate possessor of a donkey, there was no one to prevent the donkey from sharing the back kitchen with the family. Sir Curtis Lampson gave corroborative evidence on this point before Sir Richard Cross's Committee in 1881.

The limit of wages of the Peabody tenants, from 30s. downwards, seems to meet the most pressing cases, especially when we look to the earnings of the most considerable part of the tenants. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the buildings do not benefit the very poorest class. The lowest rent for which a room is let is 2s. 1d. a week. It is, therefore, evident that people who earn only 12s. or 13s. a week cannot

afford more than one room at this rent : and overcrowding is not allowed in the Peabody Buildings. The same objections apply to the various industrial dwellings all over London. We have to face the fact that, unless we shut our eyes to overcrowding, no amount of building at such a cost as that hitherto taken as the requisite standard can provide dwellings for the very poor.

There is no greater hardship attendant on the question of dwellings than that which arises when any houses are condemned to be closed and pulled down. The theory is that the inhabitants are always allowed a certain period of time within which to find fresh rooms ; but that is not a fact. They are generally driven from rooms that are unwholesome to others quite as bad. The pressure of the overcrowded masses of the population in some parts of London might be relieved if it were possible to distribute them, for there are large areas of uninhabited houses in districts which would be suitable ; but the fact that the largest proportion of those who live in the congested districts are obliged to live close to their work, no matter under what conditions, prevents such a remedy, and where earnings are so low the price of the railway fare is an insurmountable barrier to moving farther away. The centre of London must always be crowded, because from it the working classes can always command the labour-markets of the Metropolis. The dock labourers, the bricklayers' labourers (who are obliged to be at some spot where work is to be had at 6 A.M.), the

women who take their work home, and the girls who work in factories, and must be at the factory daily, whether there is work or not, must be within calling distance if they are to have a chance of employment. The uncertainty of employment and its precarious nature add much to the pressure of crowded centres. If work were constant, the poor might pick and choose their locality and their homes ; but as it is they have no choice, and experience has taught many who have tried the experiment, and have gone to live away from their work, for the sake of lower rent and less crowding, that flitting does not answer.

What effect the wholesale closing of houses may have on the landlord in the East-end, in the direction of making him realise that unless his property is put into habitable condition he will be unable to let it, one can hardly say ; but the experience of St. Luke's does not encourage us to believe that the tenants will benefit much. In that district as the houses have been pulled down, entirely in the interest of their owners, large warehouses and factories have arisen in their place, forcing the poor to go farther northward, to districts already overcrowded ; in St. Luke's, as the rookeries have been destroyed, no kind of habitation for the poor has been substituted ; and the overcrowding and the squalor of Hoxton are the direct result of the demolitions on the other side of the City Road.

It is evident that the rent which the poor can afford is much less than any which is now asked. What they could pay is 1s. 6d. a week per room, or (to put it



in their own words) "a room and a place for washing at 1s. 6d. a week." Hitherto no attempt has been made to improve the condition of those whose weekly earnings are never much more than 14s. The cost of site and building being so large, the problem seemed insoluble. The money given by Lord Iveagh, however, will enable the trustees to prove (what has long been maintained by those experienced in such matters) that it is possible to provide accommodation at weekly rentals of 1s. 6d. and 2s. for each room. There are tens of thousands of poor men whose wages do not admit of their paying more ; yet now they pay from 2s. 6d. to 4s. a week for rooms inferior in every respect to those which they can get under the Guinness Trust. It will require careful management and experience to work the scheme ; but, if the trustees can secure sites at reasonable prices, the rooms can be let at such a rental, and return enough to pay  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., in addition to the cost of maintenance. If possible, each set should consist of two rooms and a small scullery, so as to avoid the necessity of eating, working, and sleeping, in the same apartment, which is conducive neither to health nor to morality. If financial considerations allowed, the houses should not be over four stories high, for dwellings of higher elevation interfere with the free course of air and crowd too many within a limited area. There should not be more than two families, or, at the most, three, on the same landing. This could be arranged by having stairways at the front and at the back of the house, the same floor being

reached from both sides. The closets should be outside the main building, in a tall shaft, access to each being by the respective landings. A corresponding shaft on the other side should serve as a dust-shoot, having doors on each landing. By this means no smells could proceed from the drains. There should be a copper, or washing place, on each landing, or on the roof, which should be flat, so as to serve for a drying-ground ; and hot water should be laid on, which could be done at a small cost, and would insure that the tenants did their washing in the proper place. The chimneys should be in the centre, and the shafts from the closets should overtop everything. The basement should be asphalted and laid out in divisions for the use of any tenant with his barrow or any part of his stock-in-trade. The internal fittings should be of the plainest description, and glazed tiles as dados for stairs and rooms would be clean and indestructible. This is only an idea of what the buildings might be to suit the class which, having regard to the exigencies of their tenants, the Guinness Trust endeavours to assist. Without carrying out the highest ideal of what scientific architects and experts declare necessary, this plan would provide the poor with wholesome dwellings at a cost they could afford to pay. Care in selecting the sites and an honest architect are the two essentials of success. The experience of the School Board buildings shows that a reputation does not always ensure good or honest workmanship. A reputation is of no value in comparison with the certainty that

the people to whom the work is intrusted are honest and will provide good workmanship.

What strikes the impartial observer of this question is that, whilst on every hand the magnitude of the evil and the sufferings of the poor are admitted, and legislation to meet every point has from time to time been provided, there is an apathy on the part of the authorities out of which public opinion has not yet roused them. There has been a long series of Acts dealing with the housing of the poor; yet their condition becomes worse yearly. Mr. Torrens's Act, Lord Cross's, and Lord Shaftesbury's, are evidence of what has been intended; but the result is small. Where successful efforts have been made, they have been entirely the work of private persons; and the feeling has become general that, local authorities having always shown indifference, all efforts in this direction should be made by private benevolence, because the local authorities, with such powers as they possessed, could gradually, with no great cost, have transformed London so that all the unsanitary dwellings would have disappeared. The Local Government Board have laid down elaborate rules as to the amount of air and space necessary for each person. Only fifteen London parishes have adopted them; and St. Mary's, Islington, has restricted them to the minimum possibility. There have been too many Acts dealing with the question in some respects. The vestries in many cases tried to lay the responsibility of improvement on the Metropolitan Board of Works; the Board, in its turn,

referred the matter to the Vestry ; the poor have been shuttlecocked between the two authorities, and have suffered. The County Council presents the possibility of having a more concentrated authority. In its hands the great and hitherto only practical measure, the Shaftesbury Acts, should be brought into operation. The Acts have never been tried outside Liverpool, but the powers which they confer are sufficient ; the Council being empowered at any meeting to pass a resolution adopting the Acts and have them applied through the Home Secretary, they can be carried out economically and expeditiously. The dividends paid by existing industrial dwelling companies will reassure the rate-payers that the scheme will not lay fresh burdens on them, and if the County Council decides to take up the work of housing the poor it can give cheaper and better houses than any other corporation. In the first place, it can borrow unlimited sums of money at 3 per cent. ; and it would be indifferent as to profit. This means substantially that the capital sum needed to construct the dwellings would be less than for similar buildings erected by ordinary enterprise ; and, the houses not being built for a dividend, the rents might be proportionately lower. The gravity of the question is becoming a national conviction.

There is one most important point which affects the welfare of the poor in regard to their homes, one to which sufficient importance is not attached ; and that is the matter of inspection. There should not be a badly-drained, badly-ventilated, house in London, if the

system of inspection laid down by law were enforced ; but the law is a dead letter. In no respect have the local authorities failed so grievously as in this. It is not going beyond the truth to say that the failure is in great measure due to the fact that local authorities are composed of local people, and local people often own unsanitary dwellings, or are relations of those who do. There are many cases where the owner of unsanitary dwellings was a vestry-man, and the sanitary inspector his brother-in-law, and no representations made on the subject had any effect. The sanitary inspector belongs to the people himself, with no elevated tastes or ideas ; and he becomes habituated to the scenes of dirt and squalor around him, and views it all as a matter of course. There is a very good story which shows how such people regard the condition of the poor as chronic. During the investigation in various parts of London at the time of the sitting of the Commission on the Housing of the Poor, four of the commissioners, in company with the sanitary inspector, visited one of the most degraded courts in London. The members of the Commission included one or two illustrious persons whose identity was concealed from their cicerone. On entering a court where a terrible picture of poverty and squalor met their eyes, the inspector turned to the most illustrious of the party, and, slapping him on the shoulder, exclaimed, "What do you say to that, old cock ?" the only feeling in his mind being that he was showman of an exhibition, by which he earned his living. It is obvious that men

appointed under those conditions cannot afford to be honest, or to take the side of the poor, when their doing so entails the displeasure of the body to which they owe their appointments. There are some sanitary inspectors who would willingly use the powers extended to them, and come forward in the interest of the poor ; but the public opinion of the body they serve is against them, and they dare not speak out. Happily, the appointment of the medical officers of health in the London district is more independent ; and the regulations passed by Mr. Ritchie are a step towards what every one who cares for the poor must desire to see carried out in other departments. The regulations by which the medical officer of health is partly the servant of the Local Government Board, and only to be dismissed with its consent, is the greatest boon to the poor. The same regulations should be applied to surveyors and inspectors of nuisances. Until we have all such officers independent of the local authorities, the condition of things will not improve. There can be no guarantee, with the claims of friends and relations, and the inherent love of jobbery that characterises the traditions of Bumbledom, that the men appointed to fill those posts are capable and honest. It is difficult to over-estimate the power for good which such a change would put into the hands of the clergy and district visitors, who are at present stopped by the hopelessness of appealing to the authorities through their inspector ; and the men appointed by the Local Government Board would be of a better class, as has always been the



case when patronage has been removed from the local authority.

If the County Council would enforce the Shaftesbury Acts, and the Local Government Board would make the positions of medical officers, of surveyors, and of inspectors, alike, the change that would come over London in a few years would be very great. That change can be brought about only by more interference with and supervision over local bodies by the Local Government Board; and in the interests of the poor, the most helpless portion of the community, there should be no delay.

Work among the poor impresses one strongly with a deep sense of their wrongs, and of their inability to help themselves. There are thousands who pity and help them; but how many thousands more who only blame them for the wretchedness of their lives, and lay the whole responsibility of their troubles on their weaknesses and improvidence! Such criticisms make one burn with indignation. There is no patience, no heroism, no self-sacrifice, so sublime as that which meets one every day among the poor. To say that they are indifferent only because they are ignorant is absolutely untrue. Sorrow and joy are common to all classes. Hunger, pain, thirst, and cold, are sensations we all undergo; and the love of husband and children is as deep among the poor as in the hearts of the greatest in the land. The poor know their woes, and they think that there is nothing to be done; they have become accustomed to be hungry and cold, believing



that it is their lot, and that they must bear it. It is a sense of that, and not indifference, which makes them patient with a patience beyond all praise, before which one stands ashamed.

We cannot do much to ameliorate their lot in the matter of finding them work and wages ; but we can help them to rise out of the conditions of life which breed despair. It is easy to talk of intemperance and immorality : it is forgotten that the conditions of their life offer them nothing else. If a man and his family live in a room in which we would not kennel our dogs, need we wonder that the man seeks warmth and light at the public-house ? If he and his wife, and grown-up daughters and sons, are forced to sleep, eat, and dress, in the same room, can we expect them to preserve the standard of morality which we profess to enforce upon our own class ? A great change is coming over England, one which, although it has advanced slowly, is now encroaching rapidly ; and that is in the effect which education is having on the rising generation. Their increased knowledge will have the effect of making them feel how unbearable is the life they are forced to lead, and the higher standard of comfort they will aspire to must give birth to feelings of discontent and anger. They will not submit to adversity with the patience of their parents. To them already is coming the consciousness that light, air, and sunshine, are God's gifts to the poor as well as to the rich ; and they will demand their heritage, and that with no uncertain voice. Home to them will no longer mean the dirty,

narrow, damp-smelling room in which they passed their childhood. It will mean a dwelling, howsoever small, in which a life such as they aspire to, better and brigher than their past, will be possible, in which hope and affection will play no unimportant part ; a life which, whilst accepting the inequalities and distinctions that must always appear in every community, will be full of dignity, patience, and courage, qualities of which they and their fathers have set an example that is the admiration of the civilised world.

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NOTE.—Since this paper was written, large clearances have been made in many of the localities mentioned, and the County Council are preparing, very slowly, to build. The dwellings erected by the Guinness Trust have fulfilled the highest expectations ; but they are quite insufficient to cope with the demand for accommodation from the people who are now unable to live near their work. In Bethnal Green the overcrowding and unsanitary conditions are worse than before. The poor are forced to occupy what rooms they can get rather than risk losing their work by living farther away.

THE SALVATION ARMY.

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There are three divisions into which the poorer classes in London may be divided: (1) the working men in receipt of constant wages, and rarely out of work; (2) working men, their employment uncertain, and their wages small, who are so unskilled that they can count on regular employment only in times of great prosperity, and at other times earn barely enough for support; and (3) "the submerged tenth," those who have drifted into a hopeless condition. The first class seldom needs assistance. The club provides for most of its domestic exigencies, and as the children grow up their earnings augment the family incomes. The second class is constantly in need of help. Thrift and the greatest self-denial do not provide a store sufficient to carry it over bad times, and when work is slack privations of terrible severity have to be undergone. The third class is one which, through long and varied experience, has been the despair of practical philanthropists.

If we examine the charitable work of this century, we shall find that at the beginning it was directed towards reclaiming those who had fallen into irredeemable degradation. Mrs. Fry, John Howard, and all the early philanthropists, strove towards that end ; and until the days of Lord Shaftesbury the work of the charitable was mainly an endeavour to give what we now call the residuum another chance. It would be untrue to say that their work was a failure. Among the thousands with whom they came in contact, there were some still amenable to influence. These, however, were a small minority. As time wore on the beggars multiplied (the result, mainly, of indiscriminate charity), and infested the streets so numerous that societies, such as the Mendicity Society, the Society for the Relief of Distress, and the Charity Organisation Society, arose to deal with the wretched men and women, waifs and strays of humanity, who thronged our large towns, harrowing the hearts of those who listened to their terrible tales of suffering and sin.

The result of the investigation of those societies has been that there is a class, a very large one, for which there is no future but the workhouse. Little real good could be done among people not anxious to help themselves. When self-respect has vanished self-control disappears. If we inquire closely into the life of the drunkards, the loafers, and the most degraded women, we find that in nearly every instance they have had at least one chance of retrieving their character, and of leading an honest life, but that from some serious

moral defect, or an inability to resist temptation, they drifted back. Unless we are prepared to undertake to be personal police to them, there is no hope for them. Constant supervision would enable them to carry on certain work, and while control was maintained the moral improvement would continue; but once those restraints were relaxed the weaknesses to which they had succumbed would again assert themselves. The difficulty of inducing a feeling of self-respect is added to by the absence of any actively sympathetic public opinion. Where every man is a drunkard or a loafer, and every woman a prostitute, no standard of right and wrong is possible. Such a condition is a source of danger to the country.

As the various needs of the poorer classes thrust themselves on the notice of the community, means of help were devised; and it is not an exaggeration to say that there is no case of want, or of illness, or of vice, for which there is not some remedy to be found among the charitable agencies. There are times, however, when, for some inscrutable reason, the conscience of the country wakes. Then, in a blind and unquestioning way, the country pours its riches into the hands of some reformer who, like General Booth, has caught the popular fancy, not taking the trouble, first of all, to inquire whether the condition of neglect and destitution which he describes is actual, or, if it is, what remedies there are to meet it. Year after year, for over fifty years, charities of all kinds, devised to meet every variety of circumstance, have been formed; and

the problem among philosophical philanthropists has been how to stop their increase. It may be interesting to take the important points of the Salvationist scheme, and show what the Church of England and other religious bodies have done in the same direction. I cannot say that the established societies have undertaken all the tasks which General Booth sets himself. His Labour Bureau, for example, is so comprehensive that it would almost need a Government Department to carry out its programme. It may be well, however, to analyse what he is doing, and to see how far his efforts overlap the efforts of others.

General Booth, like everyone who has witnessed among the poor the sufferings of their lives, has, with a wonderful gift of organization, conceived a scheme some parts of which, if carried out, might confer great benefit. Fundamentally, however, he is a prophet of what we know already. He treats the "submerged tenth" as a discovery of his own, and believes that his is the first definite and serious attempt to raise them. For many years before he was heard of, organizations for coping with the evils he describes were actively at work, and had done much good.

Beginning with the largest class of whom General Booth writes, the homeless and starving poor, for whose benefit he proposes shelters and lodging-houses,—of which he has already opened a few, where anybody in want of a bed or an evening meal can find one either on payment or through charity,—we shall find on inquiry that there are many such places in London,

which have been open for years. The Newport Market Refuge, the Field Lane Refuge, the House of Shelter in Waterloo Street, the Houseless Poor Asylum in Whitecross Street, and the Providence Row Refuge, are only a few, taken at random, of the many shelters in London, conducted on the lines of the Salvation Army, where any homeless person can have food and a clean bed at night and next morning, and, if willing to work, can be assisted to carry out his desire. Many of the refuges have been open for over thirty years, and have given help to hundreds of thousands. The Newport Market Refuge gave 19,870 beds and meals in 1890; the House of Shelter, a small building, gave 1,806. The Homeless Poor Asylum can take in 500 a night, and is always full; and the Providence Row Refuge has, since its opening in 1860, given lodgings, suppers, and breakfasts, to a million persons. In connection with all the shelters there is a labour agency—the primary object being that the help afforded should be a stepping-stone to regular employment. Many of the lodgers are people who go to the refuge because the discipline is less strict than that of the workhouse. The great advantage of the refuge is that every case is gone into carefully by some responsible person. The refuges, besides, have agencies for dealing with the children who come into them; and one of the chief successes of their work is attained in dealing with the children's futures. All the refuges named are worked in connection with the Church of England; and they are cited as indicating what is being done by that



body. There are also Roman Catholic and Dissenting charities of a like kind, all doing the same work, and on more or less the same bases, much too numerous to mention. The prices of the food supplied are the same as those of the Salvation Army, and when there is positive destitution food is given for nothing. The "evening Salvation meeting" is not part of the entertainment; but prayers are read at night.

One of the most important works of which General Booth writes is the much-needed assistance to discharged prisoners. No work is more difficult; none more disappointing. It is hard enough to find employment for the sober and the honest. It is much more difficult to find it for those who have forfeited all claims to relief; yet the undertaking has not been neglected. The Duke of Westminster, as Chairman of the Royal Society for the Assistance of Discharged Prisoners, wrote a letter on the subject to *The Times*. No authority is greater than his. He tells a very simple story of what has been and is being done, and, quoting the words of Sir Edward du Cane, Chairman of the Commissioners of Prisons, says :—

In 1878 a society [meaning the Royal Society] was established for aiding prisoners discharged from penal servitude, and has successfully carried on their most useful duties since that time. Since 1878, when the local prisons were transferred to Government, a uniform system has been applied to all localities, and the formation of aid societies has been so much encouraged that there are now 63 discharged prisoners' aid societies working in connection with all prisons in England and Wales, besides 42 other societies, refuges, and homes; and in London, no less than 15 societies are engaged in

the work, and every prisoner has on release an opportunity of being assisted by one or other of them.

The system adopted by those societies is different from that of General Booth. Their experience is that there is great danger in allowing discharged prisoners to come into contact with one another. The men then compare notes and plan mischief. In one respect, however, the two methods coincide. Work is always found for those who want it. General Booth does not exaggerate the horrors of the despair which overtakes a poor prison-bird when he finds that his chance of regaining his position and earning an honest living is hopeless. Nothing is more heart-rending than to listen to the tale of the weakness and the depravity which lead to crime. Still, the facts I give show that no man need become a confirmed criminal from want of a helping hand in his hour of need.

By a natural transition, we come from the criminal class to one quite as difficult to deal with—the fallen women of our large towns. The class has, for practical considerations, been divided into two : those who have fallen for the first time, and those who are so degraded as to be almost beyond hope. No work has developed more largely than that which aims at rescuing those women. The number of homes for their succour has increased to an almost undesirable extent. Among the associations for the assistance of the most degraded, where longer training and more severe discipline are imposed, may be mentioned the Church Penitentiary

Association, which in 1890 sent 2,777 women out to try and begin life anew ; the Female Mission to the Fallen, which since 1836 has rescued over 20,000 women ; the Friendless and Fallen Institution, where since 1875 at least as many have been received ; and the Homes of Hope, in Regent Square, which during thirty years have been steadily working on a rather broader basis. These are a few from among the seventeen registered in the list of London charities. There are, besides, very many private homes, dependent on the support of friends and workers, of which the public know nothing. Many of those institutions divide their work into Rescue and Prevention, and are in communication with others whose mission is to prevent young women, when friendless and alone, from going astray. The London Female Preventive and Reformatory Institution, in Euston Road, has no fewer than seven affiliated homes, into which the fallen or the friendless who need succour are drafted ; and has a shelter open all night to any woman who may wander there in search of rest and food. Among the women who profit by the homes are many young mothers who but for the help would be unable to make a fresh start in life. The work of rescue would not be complete were the welfare of the infant not considered. Therefore, in every case, the child is provided with a good nurse, and looked after by the matron of the home when the mother has returned to work.

Those few instances will show that the work of

rescue is not attended to by the Salvation Army only. Experience has shown that the work of rescue is best carried out with little parade. Anything approaching hysterical treatment is fatal to repentance.

The number of homes for the protection of girls is almost as great. It is difficult to arrive at an accurate calculation. Many of the homes are on a very small scale, and under the management of women. Among those best known are Princess Louise's Homes at Wanstead; those of the Society for the Rescue of Young Women and Children, in Finsbury Pavement; and the Travellers' Aid Society for the protection of girls coming to town without a home to go to. The story told by General Booth of the girl who was refused admittance to a refuge on the ground that she was not a fallen girl, and shortly afterwards returned to tell the matron that she had qualified, need never be quoted as proof that no help is at hand to prevent so terrible an expedient. What I have stated is enough to prove that of the means for rescuing women when fallen, and for preventing others from falling, there is no lack.

There is one branch of Mr. Booth's scheme—his popular Court of Arbitration, which is to be applied in furthering work—which is so distinctly connected with rescue that, for convenience, I take it here. He deplores the want of any means in London for affording the poor legal assistance; and he quotes, as an example, the difficulty of bringing punishment to the betrayers of lost women, and the injustice which allows all the consequences of sin to fall on the weaker

sinner. He gives instances of cases where his agents have traced out the seducer, and forced him to make adequate pecuniary reparation. General Booth speaks of such an institution as original; but there has been at work since 1844 the Associate Institute for the Protection of Women and Children, which in 1890 dealt with 734 cases.

The most comprehensive portion of the Salvationist scheme is the Advice Bureau. There is not one item of its designs to which some established organization (it may be, perhaps, only the elementary court of redress, the police court) is not already attending. Disputed agreements, affiliation cases, cruelty to animals, assault, bankruptcy, bills of sale, breach of promise, cruelty to children, divorce, executors' duties, disputes of husbands and wives, libel cases, questions of marriage laws, next-of-kin wanted, cases of trespass—these are only a few of the questions to be undertaken by the new tribunal, whose law, let us hope, will be as sound as its aims are varied.

General Booth's emigration scheme is ambitious enough to satisfy his most enthusiastic followers. Whether he can carry it out, and whether, in the short space of time his emigrants stay at the farm-colony the influence he brings to bear on them will have sufficiently eradicated the defects which have mainly brought them thither, so as to make them welcome to the colonists over the sea, is a matter on which we may have some doubt. Emigration is always being urged as the panacea for the sufferings of the poor, and many

attempts have been made, and are being made, to increase it ; but insuperable difficulties always present themselves in the unwillingness of the poor to go, and in the difficulty of finding people to emigrate who are worth the trouble and expense. The colonists, naturally, are not desirous of receiving our surplus population, who cannot live here because they cannot work as well as others, or are unwilling to try, planted among themselves. The great expense of emigration, as long as it is left to private agencies, must always make it a difficult work ; and the "submerged tenth" are unlikely to succeed better in a country where health, energy, and industry, are indispensable for success. Still, recognising those difficulties, many agencies are at work in that direction : the most novel and interesting is that organised by Lord Brassey and Mr. Tuke.

An important part of modern philanthropic work is omitted by General Booth. The boys and girls of England, to whose welfare the clergy and all practical people now devote themselves, evidently do not interest the Salvation Army. The lost, the starving, the outcasts beyond the pale of salvation (and generally so from personal weakness or vice), who long ago were sadly passed by from a conviction, born of long experience, that nothing can be done to improve their lives materially, are the sheep that General Booth takes for his flock : the charitable are asked to help him to take up a task which, from the beginning, is fraught with failure. Nearly a century of work has proved that,



sad as it is, trying to save these people is wasting time and money. The wisest as well as the greatest philanthropist of this century, Lord Shaftesbury, recognised that at the beginning of his career ; and his life's work was given to saving the children of the poorest and lowest of the populace, knowing that the seed planted in young hearts would bear fruit.

General Booth does refer, in a very cursorary way, to the waifs and strays of the streets of London, and advocates the establishment of *crèches* in the centres of population, evidently being unaware that there are *crèches* in all parts of London, mainly under the management of, and supported by, the clergy and the district visitors. Proceeding, he indicates slightly how he would protect friendless waifs and strays. It would not be accurate to say that, in this particular, or, indeed, in any other, he states that all the great evils he deals with are not recognized, or that attempts are not made to cope with them ; but he certainly does so by implication, for nowhere in *Darkest England* is there the smallest hint that any evangelizing work is being done. The impression left on the reader is that his scheme is the first that has ever been put forward seriously to grapple with the terrible problem. He seems to know nothing of the Ragged School movement ; or of the work of the Church of England Homes for Waifs and Strays ; or of the work done by Dr. Barnardo, which, whether we agree with all his ways of carrying it on or not, is undoubtedly great. As regards every charitable enterprise General Booth is silent. His book, from beginning



to end, is a tacit indictment of the Church of England and the Nonconformists. One has no wish to attribute to him any motives other than those of a great desire to benefit the sorrowful and heavy-laden ; but it would have been better policy on his part to have admitted what is being done by the great religious bodies. He knows as well as everyone must who lives much in contact with the poor that the work done by the religious bodies is gigantic ; and that, although it cannot cope with all the evil and poverty it encounters, which increases out of proportion to the power of the clergy to arrest it, the work grows year by year.

The clergy have shown great forbearance in not resenting the tacit accusation which his work contains ; but those who know them and work with them need not be so reticent, and may even say for them what I have heard said repeatedly when talking to those who live and work in the most degraded parts of London, and said by those who have lived in those localities all their lives, and know every house and every family : "I do not know where the Salvation Army work, or where they go ; but I have never come across them." The Church, however, can leave her work to be judged by its results. The Sunday-schools, the mothers' meetings, the guilds, the Bands of Hope, the clubs for young men and women, the series of innocent evening amusements, the dinners for hungry children, the clothing clubs, the relief in illness and want, the maternity charities, the *crèches*, the country holidays for children—these are signs that the principle, "I am not

my brother's keeper," has long since died away. The consciousness that the responsibility of wealth and position cannot be overlooked is one of the strongest and most universal convictions of the nineteenth century. Without blare of trumpets or noise of drums, the little army of workers, like ants, busily and silently carry on a work which is stupendous. General Booth's appeal, however, has seized on many imaginations. Our usually phlegmatic people have been roused into a semi-hysterical state and impelled to pour their money with unquestioning faith into the hands of an organization for which they have hitherto professed contempt. If the offerings were an expiation for indifference, and an addition to ordinary benefactions, there would be nothing to say. Unfortunately, charity is not an unlimited quantity. When people give to General Booth, they cut off other subscriptions. The result of replenishing General Booth's coffers is less help in every other direction. All parts of London suffer materially from what has been given to the Salvation Army. One has but to read the daily appeals in the newspapers to realise how large is the falling-off. There are thousands of poor people who sadly want the help they have had in past years, while nearly £100,000 goes into the Salvation Army balance, to be lent out by General Booth on his bonds, or promissory notes, from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 per cent., until his scheme is matured, and his various agencies are set to work. The dismay of many East-end and South-London clergy at the result of their annual Christmas appeal is piteous.

Every pound sent to the Salvation Army that was part of the charity given annually to established agencies is so much weight added to the burden, heavy enough as it is, that has to be borne by the poor. The clergy do all they can to mitigate the suffering; but their means are slender, and quite inadequate without the support from outside that hitherto has always been forthcoming.

There is beside the "submerged tenth" a class of poor people who are still, with outside assistance, able to keep their heads above water. There are thousands of families whose earnings are precarious, and altogether amount to less than 18s. a week, who are still able to keep their home, and the humanizing and sacred influences which gather round it, by means of the timely aid which the clergyman or the district visitor provides. That help withdrawn, they have no future, and sink into the residuum General Booth is trying to save. An effect of General Booth's scheme, therefore, will be to swell the ranks of the residuum. One of the weakest spots in the Salvation Army scheme is the centralization of the work in General Booth. His capacity for organization is remarkable; but he is not immortal, and when his life is done what security shall we have of the qualities of those on whom his trusteeship will fall? The operations of a gigantic organization like that of the Salvation Army cannot always be satisfactorily controlled by one man. If General Booth were satisfied to be chairman of a body of trustees, he would mitigate a reasonable misgiving. In

a momentary fit of enthusiasm he may get large sums given for his work ; but when the cold fit supervenes, as it most surely will, an account of his stewardship will be asked. The history of Dr. Barnardo's homes is a very good illustration of how delicate and ephemeral public confidence is. The bare suspicion that the organization of his work was imperfect brought such a pressure of public opinion to bear upon him that he wisely formed a committee, who came to know the value of his efforts : with the result that no charity is more prosperous, or has gained more in public estimation, than his. Some people are anxious that General Booth should be given a free hand, and allowed to try his scheme, feeling that if he fails it will be better than that it should be nipped by criticism. Even General Booth's enthusiastic followers admit that it is an experiment, and that it has been tried before and found wanting, although not on so large a scale ; but still they say, " Let us stand by, and give him a chance." They cannot realise how disastrous the hopes which they cherish may prove in the process ; and they never think for a moment of one of the most serious results of the experiment, the swarms of unemployed that it will bring to London. Every great charitable experiment only increases the poverty and improvidence of the very poor. It brings the unemployed from the country in search of the much-advertised relief, and the pressure becomes harder and harder.

## THE DOMESTIC SERVANT.

Nothing is more remarkable in these days, when the difficulty of getting permanent and well-remunerated employment is so great, than the dislike among both sexes of the working classes in England to domestic service. Howsoever scarce work may be, howsoever small the earnings of any other profession, both men and women accept them in preference to servant's work. It was not so formerly, when wages in service were much lower, and work was much harder ; when the principle that certain things pertained only to certain offices had not been recognised, and servants were willing to turn their hands to whatever came to them to do, and the answer, "That is not my place," was unknown. The standard of comfort was lower ; the obvious wants of life, such as good food and decent lodgings, were considered luxuries ; and on the less important necessities very little consideration was bestowed. One has only to go over any of the old houses in England, or, better still, in London, to see what was considered sufficiently good accommodation for servants. The women fared better than the men ; for, although relegated to the attics, with the heat of the summer sun

warming their rooms to suffocation, so that the want of ventilation in summer was nearly as unbearable as the bitter cold of winter, they did have some light and air, which the men-servants never enjoyed. Underground, dark, badly-ventilated rooms were the men's lodgings—beds in the servants' hall, or in any dark holes and corners, were good enough for them. Although the state of affairs is vastly improved, there are still many houses in the most fashionable parts of London where the want of space and the impossibility of building prolong the evils. These houses, however, are few, and were the Acts about housing the working-classes put into force underground sleeping rooms would become obsolete. The great improvements which London has undergone during the last forty years have affected the upper rooms for servants. The old-fashioned houses with their low rooms are fast disappearing, and Mansard roofs have changed rooms at the top into sanitary spaces. In such matters, the change that has come over the lives of servants is great. The consideration shown by their masters is another improvement in their lot. No one can say that the life of a servant in a well-appointed house is hard or uncomfortable, or that there is overwork. There are times, undoubtedly, when the pressure is heavy; but there are periods of leisure also, and ordinarily the routine is so monotonous as to be mechanical, and, therefore, not arduous. No one knows better than a housekeeper how very particular servants are about food. Not only must it be ample: it must be well cooked, and of such variety

as to make it an important item in the *cuisine*. It will be understood that we are now considering the condition of servants in the employment of well-to-do people in England, not that of those employed in establishments of the Royal Family or of exceptionally rich people.

The complaint, which once was not uncommon, that servants are underfed is now never heard. It was formerly not usual to give them the same amount of meat as they now consume. Bread-and-cheese was an important item in their daily food, certainly among women-servants; but they now eat meat and solid food in quantities which would tax the digestion of a Temperance orator. Their work enables them to take more solid nourishment than people who lead sedentary lives; but one cannot refrain from the suspicion that the quantity of meat eaten, and the strong tea and beer which they consume, are, more often than overwork or under-feeding, the cause of the illnesses among them. The food of the upper servants is very much that of their masters (less the extra delicacies with which masters might easily, and with advantage to themselves, dispense); and that of the whole household is in extraordinary contrast with what it would be in their own homes. If we really look carefully into what seems the great drawback to a servant's life, the want of independence, and the difficulty of getting out, it does not amount to a hardship. As regards women-servants, it is not a disadvantage for them, when they are young, to be under such control as admits of



their having only a short time for going out (especially at night : they seldom ask leave for day-time), and obliges them to return at regular hours. Restraint is always distasteful to the young of any class or sex, and servants share the feeling of the daughters of the house, who would like more freedom in directions which custom has deemed perilous. No respectable servant, however, is ever refused her "time out" ; nor are her opportunities unduly rare, or grudging as to hours. Men-servants can get out, for the best of all reasons, that they insist on it. When not needed at home, they have quite liberty enough, looking to the endless temptations which public-houses and "billiard saloons" offer on every hand in London ; and one knows of many cases in which they have ruined themselves through betting and drinking.

If we now examine the question of wages, we see the real advantage of domestic service over almost every other employment. In no other occupation do men and women have food, board, and lodging,—and, in the case of men-servants, clothing—found for them. Whatever may befall them, their lodging and their food are as secure as any Government investment ; and their wages contrast favourably with the earnings of other workpeople. Compare, for example, the salary of a governess in an ordinary English family with that of the butler. The governess must, by birth, be a lady, who, before she can get employment, has spent a certain part of her capital in her education, and at the beginning considers herself lucky if she

gets from £50 to £60 a year. She has to dress well, pay her journeys, her doctor's bills, and often keep herself during her holidays, which, in most families, are compulsory. The man-servant starts at about fifteen or sixteen years of age, without any previous outlay, and, if he is steady and a good servant, can, by the time he is the same age as the governess, earn from £35 to £40 a year and his clothing. While her salary remains nearly stationary, he rises to be butler, and, with his perquisites, with no position to keep up, is earning higher wages than she ; which makes his a far more lucrative post ; while his wardrobe is replenished by his master from time to time. Surely, there can be no doubt as to which is the easier lot. What is the restraint of his life in comparison with hers, condemned to pass every moment of the day with her charges, who may be, and often are, mischievous troublesome creatures, from whom she cannot get away, except during her holidays, and towards whom she must exercise the greatest patience and kindness, never relaxing her vigilance for a moment ?

The lady's-maid is, perhaps, the servant whose position, as regards qualifications, comes nearest to that of the governess. Often she has to pay for an apprenticeship, either in time or in money, before she can earn much ; but the wages of a very good maid, from £35 to £45 and her mistress's wardrobe, cannot certainly be called insufficient, or much less than that of the governess, while her responsibilities are inconsiderable. The salaries of housemaids and the other

women-servants are all large in comparison, for there is no outlay required to qualify them in the first instance. Perhaps the most envied of any post in domestic service is that of housekeeper. In a large house she has no manual labour, and the position is one of dignified responsibility. It has always appeared strange that such positions are not filled by ladies more frequently than they are. A lady who has had a house of her own, and understands the value and appreciates the beauty of the art-treasures of many of the great houses of England, might, as housekeeper, lead a pleasant life ; and her employers would find in such a person, the absolute integrity required.

We waive our contention that servants have no right to complain of the conditions of modern life when we come to consider the kitchen department. We go so far as to say that it would be difficult to over-rate the *désagrémens* of a cook's life, and well-nigh impossible to pay a good cook too highly. The work is ceaseless and of endless variety. The apprenticeship is the hardest in domestic service. The coming cook, as scullery-maid, has the life of a slave. It is one of an endless struggle with dirt, aggressive and repulsive. It is also hard. It falls on a girl when she is growing, when fresh air and regular meals are almost a necessity. It is scrub, scrub, from morning until night ; and few know how many girls go down in the struggle. The higher lot of kitchen-maid is scarcely less severe. The function of cook exacts qualities of organization, punctuality, and resource,

almost unattainable in any other calling. Little do we consider at a dinner in London, where the hour of cause means anything between the time named and forty-five minutes later, the difficulty that must arise in sending the dishes up. If we remember that everything has to come at a given moment, everything in its turn, that it is of infinite variety, that every sauce must be ready with its own *plat*, nothing overdone or underdone, and that the whole dinner must be served in little over an hour, and compare it with almost any other achievement, it becomes clear that the duties of the cook are exacting. The responsibility falls on one woman. She must be capable of handling intricate details, and have her army in a high state of discipline. Perhaps the most trying condition of her work is that it has to be carried out in a temperature almost unbearable, and at an almost express speed. That, combined with the anxiety, the noise, and the strain on the nerves, is enough to account for a cook's irritability of temper. The work of the kitchen is incessant, and less well paid (in proportion) than any other domestic service. How much of happiness and success depends on a good digestion, and how inseparable that is from good cooking, is only another way of reflecting that we owe much to our cook. We are apt to forget that our servants are human like ourselves, only different in that it is we who rule; and many of the complaints about "bad servants," with which we are overpowered, would be obviated if a little more consideration were shown to them. We are always hearing of the old

servants who were friends and not servants, and we deplore the extinction of the class ; but the old order would still be forthcoming were our lives less artificial than they are. When households were smaller, and servants came from the lands of their employers, familiarity and affection were the natural outcome. It was then almost impossible for a country lad or lass to reach the fairy city whose streets were supposed to be paved with gold. They went into service in "the big house," therefore ; and they were married there, and settled down to a peaceful, if humdrum, life in their native parish. The railway train and compulsory education have broken the genial accord. Boys and girls must now be clerks, teachers, and young ladies in shops, factory girls : anything but servants.

Let us take the highest rates of wages in the trades, and contrast them with the wages earned by domestic servants ;—and let us not lose sight of the most important consideration that all factory and trade work is fluctuating and uncertain, and that some of it, owing to the constant change of fashions, may entirely disappear, while domestic work is permanent. The makers of trousers and waistcoats earn from 2s. to 3s. a day during the season (Easter to August), and are less often out of work than others. Juvenile-suit-makers earn in full work 10s. a week for the same time. Shirt-finishers earn 8d. a day, 4s. a week ; button-hole-makers and gusset-makers, 5d. a dozen, at which rate a good worker earns 2d. an hour. Tie-makers can earn 8d. a dozen, from 1½d. to 4d. an hour ; parasol-and-

umbrella-makers earn, if fairly skilled, 10s. a week ; furriers (good hands), 10s. to 12s. a week, rising to 18s., but that only for a short period. The match-maker is paid 2d. the gross. If a good hand, working 56 hours a week, she can earn 11s. 7d. ; but during the summer months trade is slack. Book-folders and book-sewers earn from 9s. to 11s. a week ; laundresses, from 3s. to 4s. a day ; and collar-ironers, about 8s. a week for three to four days a week. Dock labourers (preferred hands) earn from 15s. to £1 a week ; the casual labourer, 12s. to 15s. a week on the average of the year. A journeyman tailor may earn £2 10s. a week during the busy season ; but his average, from £1 to £2, will depend on his skill. The work is paid by the piece, and 6d. an hour, or 7d., or 8d., is the usual payment. Those figures denote the highest rates ; whereas a man is in work generally only for a few months in every year. Out of his earnings a man has to pay rent, his living expenses, and his clothes ; whilst in many cases, such as those of butlers and coachmen, besides their wages and clothing, a house is often provided. If we compare those wages with those of domestic service, it is evident that there is no comparison as to which is the most comfortable career.

There must be something fundamentally wrong with the system when we are told how many persons of the servant class are out of work, and how difficult it is to get good servants. When we contrast the lives of young men and women beginning amid other circumstances, and note their struggles and failures, we



cannot but think that something might be done to make domestic service more attractive, and that the fault lies as much with the employers as with the employed. The drudgery of any occupation is distasteful. Domestic service is not an exception, and its hardness is enhanced by the fact that the newest and lowliest servant has to bear the giant's share of the work. The "odd man" and the "scrub" are always the victims of the thoughtless selfishness of the servants above them, and the master or mistress cannot always be at hand to see that the duties are properly apportioned. In every other rank of life—indeed, in almost every other employment—we find a greater readiness to help one another. Nobody deserves pity more than the poor little slavey on whom the work of a small house falls. Those girls who, beginning thus, weather the storm are very few. It needs superhuman qualities of constitution and character to overcome the adversities, and many girls are broken down in early youth. We are overwhelmed with reasons and cures for the dislike of domestic service; but none is altogether right. We are told that there are 14,000 servants out of work, and, on the other hand, that there are no good servants to be had. There must be some *juste milieu* between those two assertions. Where shall we find it?

The new popularity of flats in our large towns is the outcome of the servant difficulty. It diminishes labour and the need for servants. In America, it solved one of the most pressing domestic questions, and it is doing the same in England. The increasing demands



of servants are making housekeeping a very expensive affair, and flats are making life easier and cheaper by enabling people to dispense with them. The flats in London are being filled by people whose incomes will not admit of their having a large staff of servants. In time we shall probably find every one, except the very well-to-do, adopting them in preference to houses. Thus we shall have the army of unemployed domestics largely increased. The change of usage will affect thousands of men and women in England, who will find it impossible to get employment. In the colonies nearly all of them would find ready work ; but the dislike to emigration is too deeply embedded in English servants to make that a practical solution. That there is a large demand for servants no one reading the advertisements in the newspapers can doubt, and that there are thousands seeking work is manifest. Why, when domestic service in all save one particular compares favourably with every other occupation, is it not eagerly sought ? The secret must lie in some compromise through which servants will realise that there is no such a thing as absolute independence : that we are all part of a great family, and that there is nothing degrading in service or glorious in "emancipation." The employers, also, must learn that those dependent on them are flesh and blood like unto themselves, with the same weaknesses and faults, as well as similar aspirations ; and that more consideration on their part would do much to restore the old order which (we are told) has passed away.

## THE CREED OF THE POOR.

England, after a long period of indifference, some few years ago, suddenly developed an intense interest in the material condition of the poor, and startling revelations have from time to time stimulated that concern. The accumulation of wealth and the increase of manufactures brought large importations of workmen into the centres of industry ; and the rapid rise in wages, whilst for the moment giving greater comfort to the working classes, increased drunkenness, overcrowding, immorality, and the attendant evils. For some years the position of working men in England was exceedingly prosperous. A good workman could command higher wages than an artizan in any other country. The hours of work were shorter ; all the necessities of life, with the exception of house-room, were cheaper ; and children could be educated at a nominal cost. For the time, therefore, the workman and his wants were forgotten. He was regarded in the light of the typical artizan of the early days of *Punch*, who told Maria "to go and see that her mother did not spoil the Sparrargrass by boiling it before he came home to dinner." Undoubtedly, nothing could

look more prosperous than the commercial condition of England in those days. While the good times lasted little was heard of the poor. Only those whose foresight and experience told them that the continuance of such general prosperity was impossible foresaw the years of want. The forebodings proved true. Our people have been passing through a time of terrible pressure. The working classes in London may now be divided into two classes: those who have regular work for fair pay; and those who have more or less work for insufficient pay, and lose it when trade becomes bad.

It would be impossible to speak too strongly in praise of the manner in which, on the whole, the working classes have borne the times. They have shown patience and fortitude. The action of the Trades Unions, and the strikes among some trades, intensified and accelerated, perhaps, the pressure that was coming; but it is unjust to accuse the working classes of being the authors of the misfortunes which have pressed so heavily on themselves. While their savings lasted, and a little work was to be had, they struggled on, living by the sale of their furniture, or pledging their clothes, trusting to the better times that were, they hoped, to come, when they might recover their positions and get back their homes.

To many, alas, that better time has never come; and the condition of their homes and clothing testifies to the dire struggle they have had to keep starvation from their doors. The general distress was accentuated by

the ruin of small firms, which threw many workmen out of employment, who, having no certainty of returning in better times to their old occupations, were obliged to seek work farther afield, in a market already overstocked with labour. The condition of a respectable man thrown permanently out of work is truly pitiable. In addition to the actual privation he endures, the anxiety of his position changes his character. His moral sense becomes blunted; he loses all habits of discipline, punctuality, self-control; after a time he seems to part with the desire as well as with the capacity for work. The sight of the suffering of his wife and children seems to harden him; and the certain knowledge that with parish relief they need not starve makes his moral descent more rapid. It is easy to pick out the children of such a man at school. The attempt to keep up the tidy appearance of their clothing has been abandoned; they become shabbier daily; their boots seem to belong less to their feet than to the pavement; and you anticipate the invariable answer, "Father's got no work yet."

Whence work is to come is a problem we are all trying to solve. There are two remedies which, if they could be applied, would mitigate the evil. Emigration and the prevention of early marriages are both, unfortunately, distasteful to the poor in England. They will suffer any discomfort or privation sooner than leave their dark, dirty, and unhealthy houses; their ignorance, their dread of the sea, and the strong family feeling that characterises all classes of Englishmen, make them

view emigration as banishment ; and no picture of the vast unpeopled tracts of the world, teeming with riches waiting for development, holds for them any temptation. To talk to them of the virtue of self-control, of the folly and wickedness of marrying early without making some provision for a family, is useless. To tell them that in your own class of life no one thinks of marrying without making some provision for the future causes only a dull surprise.

The prospect is dark ; the task looks hopeless. Early influences have moulded the characters of many of the poor into such grooves of habit that they cannot cast off their fetters. Sadly we realise that no important reform is possible, and wonder how with such miserable lives they can be fairly contented and patient.

The patience of the poor is not dogged indifference, nor reckless despair. It is a cheerful acquiescence in the fate that Providence has decreed for them, and a steady unswerving endeavour to make the best of their lives. What is the secret of this patience ? Do not we see men and women in prosperous positions well-nigh succumb to misfortunes insignificant in comparison ? I think the riddle is not difficult to answer. It is easier for the poor to accept the position. They are untroubled by the many religious doubts that assail those who are brought into constant contact with the unanswerable problems of life.

For a long time the material condition of the poor only interested those who thought much of them ; but their spiritual condition has now become quite as

absorbing. On one hand we are told that the poor in England have no belief whatever, and are occupied only with the struggle of life ; on the other, that, although not unbelievers, they are indifferent to any religious proposition, too ignorant to understand, even had they leisure to ponder, the conceptions of faith. Many who know them well vehemently assure us that the Church of England is losing what little hold she had upon the people, who are rapidly drifting—those who retain any remnants of faith—into the ranks of the Dissenters, or into the Salvation Army. Some knowledge of the poor makes us deny all three opinions. That some working men in England are Atheists is true but they are few. They belong to certain trades, and are usually the followers of some prominent member of their own class or profession with a stronger will than themselves. The majority of such men is largely composed of foreigners as a rule, who, besides holding advanced irreligious opinions, are politically strong Radicals. The nature and the localization of their work make the sphere of their influence limited, and they do not increase in number or in influence. The sedentary character of the occupations of many of them affords them opportunities for reflection which are not possible to workmen employed in more active labour. The problems of life weigh more heavily on them, and give birth to the feelings of doubt and discontent of which want of belief is the offspring. Many of the large Radical Working Men's Clubs in London are as much the temples of unbelief as of political dogmatism. Any-

one attending their meetings unprepared for the keenness of debate on religious subjects might well go away with the conviction that the working-men in London were complete unbelievers, and that to the imperfectly educated working-man life presents riddles that may fairly shake the strongest faith. The atheistical artizan, however, is no more a representative of working-class opinion than the other class of whom I spoke, who are supposed to be too ignorant and indifferent to take an active interest in any religious questions whatever,—of whom I have rarely seen a representative.

The real fact regarding religious opinion among the working classes in England is, it appears to us, simple and natural. The confidence which is the secret of their patience and courage enables them to look with something like philosophical calm on the problems which have perplexed the wise for ages ; for the faith of the poor is summed up in their strong belief in immortality, an immortality of happiness and peace. A belief in the justice of God and the reality of Heaven is the basis of their faith and the hope born of that belief makes their lives bearable. The parable of Dives and Lazarus is perhaps the best illustration of their state of mind. Nothing is more remarkable among the poor than their strong inherent conviction that the Kingdom of Heaven is not for the rich, but is their inheritance. The hardships of their life are supportable because in the unending future Lazarus will be comforted and Dives tormented. Their span here is only a time through which they must pass in order to gain



the recompense of patience ; eternal banishment from the presence of God is the requital of lives spent in self-indulgence.

The personality of Christ is a very real conception to the poor. The conviction that in taking a human body on Himself, with its capacity for suffering, He was enabled to gauge the depth of their need, and so preach the consoling doctrine of the Christian religion, is the foundation on which this belief is built. A sense of justice is strongly developed in the English character ; and that sense of justice, combined with the want of knowledge that sorrow is not the monopoly of the poor, but that there are elements of tragedy in the lives even of the prosperous, serves to intensify their conviction that the obvious hardships of their lot, so much out of proportion to others, must be more than compensated in eternity. Such a faith requires no religious profession. The heaven the poor believe in will be theirs if they live their life on earth in patience, honesty, and sobriety. The poor neither care for nor understand the dogma of the Christian religion. To them it is mere verbiage. The rock on which they build their faith is the teaching of Christ denuded of all doctrinal mysteries, and the pure lofty unselfishness of His character appeals to their weary souls. "To love God and do your duty to your neighbour" is the daily desire of the poor. Their love is shown in their intense belief in His goodness and mercy, and their duty to their neighbour in the daily and hourly acts of kindness to one another. Among the poor there is a constant

readiness to help, even down to dividing their small pittance and the children's food with those worse off than themselves. Where, but among the poor, do we see the widow cared for, and solaced, and helped to begin her solitary struggle by subscription raised among those hardly richer than herself? Nowhere else do we find the orphan, or the child deserted by its natural protector, made one of the children of the family sooner than that it should go to the workhouse. When we look for the real simple virtues that make human nature beautiful, we find it in the annals of the poor. Nowhere, and in no record of great and noble lives, do we come across such deeds of devotion, self-sacrifice, and heroism, as are witnessed among the humblest inhabitants of some of the most miserable alleys in London. There the great Master's teaching is bearing silent fruit. It is made part of every-day life.

Dogmatic belief, therefore, has little influence on the poor. Their lives are too busy and narrow, and they are too ignorant, to admit of its having an important influence upon them. A working-man has quite enough to do in earning what will support his family. He is sober and honest because intemperance and dishonesty would entail misery on those he loves; not because it would displease God, although in a vague way that idea does influence him. One simple sign of the effect which dogmatic teaching has on the poor is to be found in observing the churches which they attend. Those where long sermons are preached are generally

empty ; those in which the few simple truths of Christianity are preached are full. As preaching in the Church of England is not a distinct vocation, as among Catholics, usually the sermons delivered in the ordinary London Church are neither stirring nor eloquent ; but with the poor fine preaching does not fill a church any more than indifferent preaching empties it. It is the personal influence of the clergyman, and the simplicity of his words that attract.

Some of the largest and most attentive congregations in the most crowded parts of London listen with rapt attention to sermons which intellectually are beneath contempt, but are all-sufficing to them, as they dwell on the simple faith that lies nearest their hearts—the love and justice of God, and the rest that is awaiting the weary and heavy-laden.

Nothing, however, keeps the poor away from church so much as the poverty and badness of their clothing. They are proud, and anxious to keep up appearances ; and as long as that can be done they struggle to prevent their neighbours knowing of their distress ; and in the dim light of a Sunday night, when their shabbiness is not so easily seen, they go to church, and from their heart enjoy the peace and promise they receive. Many a poor woman has said, “I would thankfully go to church ; but I am ashamed to be seen in these rags.” It is a common belief that the poor go to church as much for the sake of what they think they may gain by constant attendance as for any better reason ; but experience teaches us the reverse.

They more often stay away because they are ashamed to let anyone know their poverty.

The most profound believers in the eternal happiness in store for the poor are naturally the women, on whom the heaviest share of life's burden falls. It is the woman's lot to scheme and plan how to make the most of her husband's money, and to bring what cheerfulness and brightness she can into the house. Marrying much too early, and becoming the mother of a large family long before she has physical strength to stand the ordeal, badly nursed and nourished, and obliged to work when rest and care are most necessary she finds her recuperative powers taxed beyond endurance ; and the struggle is long and very weary. It is a common belief that poor women do not suffer either mentally or physically as much as the more highly bred and nervously strung women of the upper classes ; but some forms of suffering are as intense to one class as to the other. Child-bearing is as great pain to a poor as to a rich woman ; and the common sorrows of maternity are equally overpowering. Hunger, cold, and want, are equally hard to bear ; and the children's want is felt as keenly by the woman of the lower classes as it is by the woman of the higher. The agony of losing a child, the unspoken pain with which a poor woman sees her child fading before her eyes for want of medicines and care, is as intense as the grief that the high-born mother experiences on losing the child on whom all her love has been lavished. No class distinctions, no centuries of breeding, can in-

tensify the one or diminish the other. The vacant place, the silenced laughter, is as great a pang of memory to the wife of the costermonger as it is to the duchess. When we have seen the love with which a poor woman has tended her dying child, the alternations of hope and fear as the little flame of life flickered again and again, and the deep agony of the parting, we have been amazed at the quiet acquiescence in the decree of the dread angel; and only when, between the mother's broken sobs and bitter tears, we have realised that she is weeping not for him but for herself—for the child has gone to the Heaven, where she will some day rejoin him—has it been possible to comprehend the strength and consolation of the belief that the Kingdom of Heaven is for the poor. To the weeping mother the last breath of the little one is a whisper of the glory he is enjoying, and in her mind's eye she sees the white-winged messengers of God bearing him upward till the golden gates open to receive him. To the poor religion means all this, and a great deal more. Want, sin, temptation, all the dread foes of their earthly life, will be vanquished; those whom they have lost will meet them on the other side of the dark river; there will be a complete vindication of the justice of God; and of the infinite tenderness of Christ, who lived their life on earth that they might be with Him in Heaven.

The hope that the teaching of Christ gave to the lives of men has been the secret of its strength and power, a strength that is as great to-day as when He

preached and taught by the Sea of Galilee. It was the first ray of light that penetrated into the dark homes of the poor and the enslaved ; and it made all they suffered then, and suffer still, endurable.

That they should consider Heaven and its rewards as their special heritage is not unnatural. A scheme of compensation which rewarded all classes alike would be of less equity. Dives has had his good things in this life : why should he enjoy an equality with them in Heaven ? They have no desire that Dives should suffer unnecessarily ; but his fate is a matter of indifference to them. He has drunk the cup of pleasure to the dregs : it is only just he should accept the consequences. Their opinion about it always seems to be embodied in a delightful answer which an old Scotch minister made to one of his flock, a rich, overbearing old lady who, complaining to him of the great agony she suffered from rheumatic gout, asked him whether he had ever experienced it. Looking at her straight in the face, he said, with great deliberation, " Na, na, my dear : I never was rich enough." So it is with the poor. They know not the temptations and the sorrows that go with riches. They judge by externals ; and side by side with their grievous poverty they see waste, luxury, extravagance. They go no deeper. They know they are miserable. That is a terrible fact, one that they cannot explain ; but they accept it patiently and uncomplainingly, being rich in faith and having the divine authority for believing that " it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle



than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

In an essay on "Artizan Atheism," Mr. Rossiter attributes much of the lack of apparent religious feeling among the poor to the want of vitality and earnestness in the teaching of the clergy of the Church of England, a teaching, he thinks, not simple enough; and contrasts their method with that of the Dissenters and the Secularists, who, by their earnestness and strength of faith, find, he supposes, a response in the minds as well as in the hearts of their hearers. The Salvation Army has been added to the formidable array of antagonists against which the Church of England has to contend.

It is false to affirm that the Church has not opened her eyes to the need of stringent reform, or that she represents only the religion of an aristocracy. No one could assert this who had gone into any of the large churches in the poorer parts of London. Any large East-end church between Holborn and the London Docks is crowded with the most attentive and poorest of congregations. It is not the intellectual power of the preacher that attracts them. It is, in the first place, a personal feeling towards him whom they know for their friend; and, in the second place, the light and warmth, and, above all, the beautiful music, which fills a void in their hearts.

There never was a time in this century when the Church of England was stronger, or more thoroughly the Church of the people, than it is at this moment. Her gain has not been conspicuous among the middle



and the upper classes. The wave of Evangelism which powerfully affected the middle classes appears to have spent its force. The effect of the more emotional movement associated with the name of Dr. Pusey, which told on the upper classes, is at least counterbalanced by the advance among those classes of the Church of Rome. Beyond question, however, the Church of England has gained and is gaining among the poor. One is loth to appeal to the evidence of the political barometer, of which the party tactician often sets the hands; but the cry for Disestablishment, loud enough once, is fainter now, either because it is not the voice of the people or because the party tactician does not believe that it is.

The Church has recognised the necessity of adapting her teaching and work to the needs of the people. As the old-fashioned clergymen have passed away they have been succeeded by younger men, whose lives are records of unselfish devotion. We find among them men of birth and intelligence who, having willingly renounced all the social advantages they enjoyed, have gone to live in the poorest and most unhealthy parts of our large towns, spending their patrimony and income in their parishes, living as poorly and sparingly as their people themselves. Who, in such parishes, is the friend and helper of his people but the clergyman? One has but to see the kindly smile and greeting between them, and watch the children crowding round him, taking his hand and pouring out their little confidences to him, to realise that he, at any rate, is trying

to preach Christ's Kingdom on earth. Such men are to be found all over London and in all our large towns.

There is no better example of the wisdom and magnanimity of the clergy of the Church than the spirit in which they accepted the passing of the Elementary Education Act, knowing as they did what the result of its working would be. In the early days of education in England, when the Church took the lead, education was directly due to their exertions. Large sums of money which the clergy had collected for the purposes of education, large school buildings which had been erected in the parishes under their supervision, passed by a process of starvation (for it was nothing else) into the hands of a body which, at first, was in strong antagonism to all Church interference in education. The greatest power the Church possessed, its influence over the young, was apparently destroyed at one blow ; and nothing could seem more complete than the divorce between Church and Education. For a time the separation was absolute, and the spirit in which both School Boards and Churchmen worked was not amicable ; but calmer counsels prevailed. The clergy, having accepted the position, wisely set themselves to see how best the lost ground could be recovered. It has been regained marvellously. Among no class in England is the Church now so largely recruited as among the young. The clergy did not begin by attempting to win the people back solely through spiritual influences. They knew that education would not be likely to increase the faith of the young ; but they hoped that

knowledge would inevitably create a desire for something to relieve the dull monotony of their lives, and, so hoping, turned their energies towards developing the means of providing them with intellectual and social interests. The results have been great, and are increasing ; for the effect of the Education Act has been to bring the clergy much more into contact with the people than they were under the old state of things. The clergyman of a parish is now brought into many varied relations with his parishioners, especially with the young. He meets them daily at the club or at classes, on the cricket ground, in the concert room, in the debating society ; he encourages them to be thrifty ; his advice is sought on the most important matters ; and, now that his chief function is no longer that of driving many to school and all to Church, he is the real counsellor and father of his people. The School Board visitor has inherited much of the unwelcome duty, formerly imposed on the clergyman, of forcing education on the unwilling. The clergy of the Church of England, in realising the necessity of making the Church of England in very word and truth the Church of the people, and themselves the servants of the people, have strengthened their institution, and more than regained the position they had apparently lost.

It is not, however, by any means solely through endeavouring to interest their people, and raise their standard of comfort and amusement, that the clergy have made their power felt. They have never pandered

to vice or weakness. They have been outspoken in attacking drunkenness, the most deadly foe of the English poor, and in carrying the crusade of temperance into the lowest slums. Of all the efforts made by the clergy none is bearing such striking fruits as that in the cause of temperance. There is not a parish in London where there are not hundreds of young men and women members of the Blue Ribbon Army, and a larger number of children members of the Band of Hope ; and, although not much can be done to counteract intemperance among the older generation who have contracted habits of drunkenness, what the clergy have done and are doing in striving to make the rising generation teetotallers must have an enormous influence for good on the future working men and women of England. No battle has ever been fought against odds greater than those which have had to be overcome in the cause of temperance. The struggle is not over ; but the cause is gaining ground every day, and winning recruits. What of prosperity and greatness England may gain in the future from the success of the movement she will owe in no small measure to the clergy of the Church of England.

It is generally believed that the influence of the clergy is on the side of early marriages, and apparently it often is. The position, however, in which a clergyman finds himself when two people (children almost in years, and certainly in experience and sense) come asking him to marry them is painful and difficult. He is quite aware that no argument he can use will prevent

them from taking the step they meditate. Knowing that he is powerless to induce them even to pause, how can he refuse to marry them, feeling convinced, as he does, that amid those circumstances they would dispense with the sanction of the Church ? If he does refuse, they may possibly go to the registrar ; but more probably they will dispense with ceremony. The question of the influence of religious beliefs and of the clergy on early marriages cannot now be discussed at length. The solution of this difficult problem is to be found, if found at all, not in the direct influence of religion, but in the growth of social and other influences which the ministers of religion foster.

It must not be supposed that, in dwelling on the work of the clergy of the Church of England among the poor, we ignore or depreciate the efforts of the Roman Catholic and the Nonconformist clergy. In endeavouring to estimate the religion of the poor, and to indicate the probable effect of the efforts of the largest and richest body of clergy in the country, we do not for a moment deny that the efforts of the ministers of other religious bodies, with which we are less well acquainted, are equally zealous and devoted ; but, speaking of the Church of England clergy as a body, we maintain that practical observation will convince anyone who is willing to observe that their position as men devoted to the welfare of those committed to their charge, and as almoners of much of the charity of the nation, has produced great and almost unmingled benefit to the poor. We venture to

claim for them, too, that they have followed the spirit of the age, and, clinging not too slavishly to the form, have held firm to the spirit, of the Christian religion.

Of this body of clergy we believe it may be truly said that the work of their lives has been to strive to diminish human suffering, and to bring the sympathy and riches of others to those whose lots are devoid of sunshine. To say they have made mistakes is only to say that they are mortal. Their standard has been high; and they have, to the best of their abilities, endeavoured to carry out the mission ordained for them by their Master, that they should "visit the widows and fatherless in their afflictions, and keep themselves unspotted from the world."

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